THE

PULPIT TREASURY.

AN EVANGELICAL MONTHLY.

VOL. I. NEW YORK, APRIL, 1884. NO. 12.

Sermons

THE BELIEF THAT SAVES.

BY JOHN L. WITHROW, D.D., PARK STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, BOSTON, MASS.

He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.—JOHN vi., 47.

WE have but a faint appreciation of this living oracle of our Lord. By frequently reading and hearing it read, we may know it to quote it as quickly as any sentence of the Scriptures. With almost no exercise of the intellect and without any feeling in the heart, the form of words may slip off our lips.

But when we set about the work of entering into the words, absorbing their historical surroundings, and submitting ourselves to their transcendent majesty and sweep of meaning, they fill a thoughtful soul with reverence as well as with rapture.

Let any one read the chapter until the scene becomes as realistic as if the words had been spoken but yesterday on a hill-side by our Atlantic shore, instead of long ago by Galilee. As scenic forms are shifted on the stage, so let thought push away what stands present of our nineteenth century and all its accessories, the prevalent institutions of the Christian religion, and the immense and multiplying ranks of the Master's followers. Let all which now so imposingly proclaims the influence, and prophesies the coming kingdom of Christ, be reduced to that original meanness, in which it was compared with "a root out of a dry ground;" and had its cradle with the cattle of the stall. One who does this, in mental exercise, will find himself standing in an isolation which is a desolation. For the world was despondent in the day of

Christ's coming. Hair-splitting and theory-spinning philosophers and scribes had tired people out with their dreams and devices. Instead of an increasing confidence in the immortal life, faith of any future existence had been so weakened, that the world had neither hope nor heart. Bankrupt heathenism had nothing now to give; since long ago it had satiated mankind with sensual delights and destroyed the appetite for immortality. For centuries their poets had been deploring the burden of existence. They had decried life as only a shadow, and taught that it was the chief misery to have to live; one sad Greek writing thus:

> "Happiest beyond compare
> Never to taste of life:
> Happiest in order next,
> Being born, with quickest speed
> Thither again to turn
> From whence we came."

And later than he, when the gloom had grown deeper, a philosopher of the Latins, who is among the best of them in fame, boldly proclaimed suicide as the privilege of expiring hope. The gate out of life stands open, said he. "Seest thou yon river, yon well? Freedom sits there in the depths. Seest thou yon low, withered tree? There freedom hangs. Seest thou thy neck, thy throat, thy heart? They are ways of escape from bondage." Meanwhile, to the mind of the more intelligent, the beyond became more abysmal the blacker this world grew. To educate themselves in the spirit of resignation, from their great man to their seething, suffering masses, the gospel of annihilation was diligently preached; by Cæsar in the senate and by his echoes throughout the empire. For inscriptions on their sepulchres they cut such sentences as these: "To eternal sleep." "I was not, and became; I was and am no more." "I was nought, and am nought." "Eat, drink, make merry, come!"

And while it is not so, that the despair of all was as sheer as that of some, still the pall upon all the world was dark enough; dark enough to justify the graphic picture of the Hebrew prophet: "The darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."

Now, upon these surroundings we see one entering whose outward form gives little evidence that He is the light of the world. And yet He is! For when He opens His lips it is to talk of a world out of sight, and a way thither, in tones which must indeed have been thrilling: "He that believeth in Me hath everlasting life."

Who is this that disputes the dismal philosophies of Epicurean and Stoic? Who addresses such a different doctrine to a dolorous age, from anything that had been heard for half a thousand years? He is a mild-mannered, unpretending traveller, who goes about teaching whosoever will listen, with methods so modest and style so simple that haughty Pharisee and supercilious scribes sat for long undisturbed in their official seats, little knowing and less caring for any local excitements which a wandering agitator might raise.

But no matter; morning, noon, and night—now sitting on a mountain and

preaching "the Sermon on the Mount," now in a fishing smack, standing out a little from land and addressing a crowd of eager auditors, and now pausing in the course of His pilgrimage from city to city—He uttered such words as never man spake. They were not churnings of a crazy mind. They were not inflammatory orations calculated to exasperate the populace against their servile and suffering lot in life. They were words charged with the spirit of sublime authority. They were words which, in passage through His pure mind, had been purged to a transparent cleanness; and so sharp that no conscience was so callous but it was cut through by them. Meanwhile the benignant tones of the man and the quality of mercy in His modes of speech, fell like a benediction on the ears of publicans and harlots, slaves and centurions, rabbins and rulers alike.

But of all the subjects that Jesus dwelt upon, which was the most original and unknown at that time? It was not the subject of faith in a supreme Deity; because mankind have this so nearly born in them that, not far from the cradling, every human being feels the everywhere-present One! It was not what Christ said of the humanities and charities which are becoming to men. There was a good measure of respect for these in the pagan philosophy and religion, even if there was scant practice of them in every day service. Neither was the new prophet's teaching on the topic of prayer, the most novel and impressive. For until men become as the brutes that perish, the soul instinctively speaks to the great Spirit from whom it came.

Was not this the most original and arresting subject of our Saviour's ministry: the certainty of everlasting life, and the unheard-of way of obtaining it—by believing in Him? For the doctrine of *everlasting* life was as unknown in that day as the doctrine of the persistence of force. They dreamed of an after-life, but their strongest faith never had wings to sweep into the spaces of the everlasting. And what they did have of a sickly hope of surviving this short life was limited to such a few of the first and favored of mankind, that for the surging masses there remained nothing beyond the portals of the grave but perpetual sleep, Plutonian night, or nameless nothingness.

What a Gospel it was in these drear and desolate surroundings to hear one say, "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." What all their wonderment was as to the meaning of these audacious, gracious words, we may not know. This, however, we may fairly surmise, that one wondering inquiry was this, which has continued to be everywhere: What is it to believe in Him so as to gain everlasting life?

Suppose they knew more about Jesus than we are sure they did! He had not yet died the ignominious death of a malefactor; and they did not know the close likeness which would at last be seen between Him and their sacrificial lambs. But imagine that by the Divine Spirit's illumination they had perceived in this humble prophet, the imperial Son of God, and Saviour of the world. Would not their anxious inquiry have been the same as that which is still heard: What is it to believe so as to be saved? This is the old question which is ever new! It is the pivotal question on which turns the ever-

lasting welfare of every one of us. Resting on falsehood here must be forever fatal. For if we have knowledge enough to inquire how to believe savingly, we have knowledge enough to lay us under the responsibility of savingly believing.

To speak then of believing on Christ, let us see if there are not three forms of faith which are found to-day, each of different efficacy.

And the first of these that I mention is,

I. A faith of Christ which does the believer no good whatever. This is a faith about Christ; concerning Christ; as to Christ. It is speculative, critical, and so conditioned that one who exercises it is no more blessed by it than the enslaved subject of an absolute monarch of mid-Africa would be blessed by sitting there in his servitude and speculating upon and criticising what he might hear of citizenship under Christian rulers in this free republic. Let him come and see!

Believing in Christ as having actually walked this world, even if one admits that He was Immanuel, God with us, will, of itself, do no more to secure everlasting life to those who simply admit it, than it will build a house over one's head to admit that God laid granite as the foundation rock in the building of the globe! There must have been—how many thousands no one knows, who saw and heard of the Son of Man, while He was on earth, who no more doubted that such a person was then in Palestine than they doubted that Herod was their king and Pilate the satrap of Cæsar. But it served them no purpose. Their belief of Christ that He was not a myth but a man had no saving effect on their lives. Believing that Christ was more than a man, the best of men; the supreme man; the white flower of the human family; the rarest result of excellent heredity, does no one any spiritual good. We believe that Socrates was the wisest of the Greeks, but that does not give us any greater wisdom. Who doubts but the African Hannibal, the first Napoleon, and our own Ulysses are the peerless captains of New Testament times—worthy successors of David and Saul and Joshua of old? But believing so does not inspire us with military genius nor secure for us the splendid glory of arms. If believing that Homer was not a myth but a man and that he wrote the Iliad; if believing that Shakespeare was indeed, as the author of all the dramas which bear his name, the matchless pen-photographer of human hearts, both false and faithful, if believing so would make poets of people, what a world of song would this have become long ago! But it is not so; because you know very well how common it is to not only know but admire great scholars and artists and yet never catch a breath of their exalting inspiration. We may sit without weariness and in rapt joy under the rendition of fine music, but never in our life voice or strike a musical chord.

So with this higher subject of faith in Christ: if it goes no further than to admit that such an one lived; that He lived a rare and radiant life; that He clothed His daily career with illustrious deeds; that He strewed His path with sweets of gentle ministries—all this we may believe, and be none the better by it. As much as this His enemies were forced to believe. Scribes, Phari-

sees and evil spirits believed all this. Such was His outshining on the dark and despairing day of His Advent that every attempt which impious infidelity in later ages has made to dismiss Him, as a myth, from the history of mankind, has recoiled; and with such a ringing contradiction that school after school of these destructive critics has been dispersed into thin air.

Is it then a great thing to believe in the historic Christ; to believe that He was the rarest result of Hebrew heredity; that His life was beneficent and His words beautiful? Why, who can disbelieve that much? And what credit is it to any one to believe that which he cannot but believe? You may believe the present English premier is the greatest living statesman! What credit is this to your knowledge of history and understanding of political affairs? The fact is palpable, imposing and so universally impressive that as you feel it nothing but misinformation or partisan feeling restrains such a faith. With all blindfolding prejudice off his eyes, it is also a mental impossibility for any intelligent mind to deny that Jesus of Nazareth was the peerless personage of history. He had no prototype except such as were to Him what rays of the rising sun streaming up the eastern heavens are to the coming orb of day. And since ever He rose, the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings, there has been no man among men who has been more like Him in living and lasting excellences, than planets are similitudes of the sun. And so we cannot but believe some things, many things and many wonderful things concerning Jesus of Nazareth. Meanwhile there may be no more of saving connection between these admissions and our future blessedness than between the admission of a man who sinking in the water admits the strength and admires the color of the cord thrown out to save him, but does not seize it; or the admission of another at sea or in a forest, that the needle of the compass does point north, but he declines to take his course accordingly. Surely there is a vast deal of faith concerning Christ which does the believer no good whatever. He might as well have never lived nor died, for any good they get whose faith in Him goes no deeper than this. There is, however, a second kind of faith in Christ which in better than that first.

II. Faith which does some good, but cannot do all.

It receives him as the teacher who has given the world its highest lessons of wisdom. And such as have this faith of Christ, are often very eloquent in magnifying the Sermon on the Mount, the story of the good Samaritan and the parable of the prodigal son. They almost waste eulogy on the words of Jesus. Not that any praise of these can be over-praise, except there be an underestimate of certain things, and silence concerning other things which are more saving.

Of course no cordial disciple of the Lord would or could underrate the excellence and usefulness of Christ's instructions. If we lived according to His moral rules of daily life; if all of us, the world over, should do so, a better land than Paradise, and a brighter glory than Eden's bloom would beautify our earth in a year. The withered blightings of the past ages of selfishness and

sin would roll away, as our natural winter does southward, to be eaten up in the great heart of a heavenly summer; and our discontent would be past.

Who then are they that say: We are Christians, for we believe that Christ was the chief of masters. To such let us answer: We more. And more than that, too: if any one has chosen Him for a model, and is trying to imitate His example when he acted out His teachings, we go with them.

Had He not graciously put His theories of life into practice, and set before the world an example of doing them, the poor tired race of man might never have attempted the task. For if He had not shown how to forgive, and forgive even the most unprovoked injuries, how could the doctrine of forgiveness have got any start in a world where retaliation and revenge had always been admissible, in many cases admirable, in some cases compulsory? Had He stopped with teaching, that life is so precious that the life of every infant is most sacred in the sight of God, what time would it have taken to rid the world of the ruthless murder and heartless sale and savage cruelty to which children have always been more or less exposed in pagan and apostate lands? And therefore for not only saying—with a little child standing by—"of such is the kingdom of heaven"—but for taking them up in His arms, we bless Him with all our parental love! And so it does do any one good to believe in Jesus as the children's best and first true friend on earth; as it also does good to any one to set Christ's services to the suffering as an example for imitation in them who would come after Him.

But this is to be observed: that it has been proved possible for one to copy after Christ, or after the copyists of His charities, and yet have little respect for Him in His highest claims! You may know by personal acquaintance, as I do, those who are notably active in neighborhood charities and who count themselves Christians, and yet their Christianity has in it nothing more of Christ than mere human kindness. Ask them to bow down before Him as their Lord; they refuse! Request their union with you in rendering Him that worship which the inspired Scriptures assure us Jehovah commanded to be rendered to Jesus—"when He bringeth in the first begotten into the world He saith: And let all the angels of God worship Him"—request their union with you in such a worship, and they will not. These have a faith of Christ, and one which goes further than those first mentioned. But not far enough to do them much good; because they have no more from Christ than the descendants and imitators of Dorcas have from that benevolent lady; no more than the members of any guild, whose object is good work among the children of want, have from the noble soul which started their association. They do in this one thing as their founder and leader did. And so, unless there be more in our Christianity than mere imitation of Christ's every day kindness, unless He shall stand in a different relation to our salvation than to merely move us to deeds of humanity and mercy, then, in the name of straightforward reasoning, how is He any more a Saviour unto everlasting life than Dorcas and Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, John Howard, and the long line of kind souls whose great deeds have started

so many humane and reformatory measures for the amelioration of want? There were charities among men before Christ was born. He broadened and deepened and purified them. But He did not originate them. Is then our Master only a reformer, who rectified what had gone wrong in social relations? This the radical in scepticism asserts. And in asserting it he has the argument, and can hold his ground unless we rise boldly to the higher ground: that the incarnate Logos was God's Lamb, slain for our sins.

There is one other phase of faith in Christ which to hold certainly does one good, if he hold it very cordially and under deep conviction; and yet it is not the faith, in our understanding of the Gospel, which it is safe to stop with if we would obtain eternal life. That is, faith in Christ as a sympathizer! It is not a new theology which they are trying to build on this one blessed truth of Christ's sympathy with sinners and sorrow at the sight of sin. But it is a new use, in the sense of another use, of an old misstatement. For centuries it has been here and there asserted, that all Christ did for our salvation was to come here and show us how to live; and to exhibit His sorrow at the sight and disasters of sin. And the only atonement which such as these have believed He made, was: the pain He endured when He came among guilty men! Concerning this we are to remark that, as for ours being a sympathizing Saviour, all His saints agree! The ages of Christendom have raised accordant praise to Him as the merciful and faithful. The Church of Christ so far as it has been true to its apostolic and evangelic spirit has never abated its hallelujahs, to Him who "carried our sorrows." So that they who come telling us they have a new gospel, and a new theology, because they say, Christ is the Sympathetic Saviour; these are doing somewhat as one who should rob the bread out of a child's right hand, and, walking round to its left side, should offer to make it a present of the same. We always knew that He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." That is as old as Gethsemane and Calvary. We have always known that the Lord "remembereth that we are dust!" A century and a half ago, one who has been called the inventor of sacred songs in our language, hymned the sympathies of our Saviour thus:

> "His eyes are majesty and love—
> The eagle's tempered with the dove.
> No more shall trickling sorrows roll
> Through the dear windows of His soul."

Surely it is sweet and sustaining to be certain that the strong and great and good stand by us; and are moved with compassion at sight of our sufferings. And we always have known our Lord did so; and therefore reject anything which comes, in the name of a new gospel, telling us a great discovery has been made; that Christ is a sympathizer!

And what say we of this: that all we are to believe concerning His atoning sufferings is, that He suffered at seeing man fallen into sin? Why, just this in reply: that such a theory of His career and crucifixion satisfies neither our reason nor our religious needs. All He did by way of making atonement was

to suffer when brought in contact with sin? Then there have been more atonements made in the world than words can tell. Then those despisers of our divine Lord who have written books to prove that there have been anywhere from one to a hundred Saviours of the world, are right. Because if His atonement consisted only in this, that associating with evil men gave Him grief of heart, then Lot in Sodom was a Saviour, and made an atonement for the sins of that wicked place. David the king was a Saviour and made an atonement for Israel, when he cried: "Rivers of water flow down mine eyes because they keep not Thy law." Ten thousand times ten thousand bleeding hearts of fathers and mothers have made an atonement for degenerate children; even as the weeping king did for his abandoned son Absolom. The world has, and always has had in it, uncounted numbers of atoning Saviours, according to this most shallow, seductive and unscriptural theory, that Christ is an atoning Saviour in that He was grieved at the defilements and disasters of sin. We respect that high morality in man or woman which shrinks with suffering sensibility at contact with sin. But while we respect and admire such as feel so, we do not worship them, we do not pray to them, we do not call them our Saviour!

What then is the faith in Christ which goes not only, as these forms, part way, but all the way of securing for us everlasting life through Him? Is it not,

III. That faith which takes Him for just what he is most plainly held out to be, in the Holy Bible? Not the Saviour of a school; not the Saviour of a philosophic theory; not the Saviour whose relations to our eternal life it takes a man of liberal learning to find out. But the Christ whom the uncritical find in Scripture. He is the true Christ. How shall we searchingly and successfully test which theory of salvation is right according to the Scriptures (for you will notice we have at this moment nothing to do with "salvation in any other")? We would try all schools of theology and all creeds of Churches and your own individual conception and conceits, by the sacred Scriptures. And how shall we determine which is right? Do you say, this doctrine of atonement by propitiation must be right, because it is oldest, and is most inwrought with the course and conquests of Christianity? It has been associated very vitally with revivals of religion and missionary movements! Well, these are high recommendations. But, we will let them pass. Will you then, who reject this old expiatory doctrine, prefer to adopt a more recent one, which is recommended by being in favor with our philosophers? Let me tell you, that since the gnostics of the first century until those of our own, there have been so many philosophic theories raised in religion and then repudiated and again raised and repudiated, that unless professing Christians shall quit philosophizing about the great subject of salvation, the Church of Christ may drift to sea and endless darkness, driven by winds of doubt and disbelief. How then shall we, who receive the Bible as at least containing the revelation of God's way of saving men through His Son Jesus Christ, get at the true view of what He did for us, and requires of us?

When an artist who understands life has painted your portrait, he invites a brother of the brush to give his opinion. That opinion is critical, skeptical, technical! He invites your relatives to a view, and receives praise or blame according to the drawing and coloring. They would have had less or greater boldness of outline and life displayed. Their eyes are on detail and technics. With them it is a question whether it is as faithful and effective as a former work, wrought by a different artist; and the best they may do is to admit that it is very good!

What then should the artist do, to determine the intrinsic merit of his work? Why, let all such brothers of the brush and amateur admirers pass out; and in their place bring in a little child! It knows no more of art terms, and touches of tone than of the telescope and astronomy. But because the instant the child's eyes fall upon the portrait it runs with clapping hands and crowing voice toward the canvas, saying, "Papa, papa; that is my papa," therefore the artist may be sure that what the child sees is the reality. He has the portrait.

Now, then, it concerns us but a little what this school or that theologian spins for a theory upon the Christ whom we are to trust. They often have such fanciful ideas of Christ and of His work for a lost world that a wayfaring man, who never saw a university except its outside walls, is soon weary of trying to learn which is the right thing to believe and rest upon in the great work of our Redeemer. What shall we do? Why as the artist took the views of the child, so let us take the views of the simple-minded who read the Scriptures just as they are written.

And who can doubt the result? As from the earliest scenes of sacrifice on Jewish altars a stream of tendency is seen moving toward Christ and Calvary; as the mysterious hints of the Master are heard, telling of the death which He was to die; as the inspired apostle's epistles are read in this simple way, and are seen stained through and through with the thought of expiatory suffering; and as the echoes, through the Revelation, repeat the praises of those who ascribe their salvation to the efficacy of His blood—who can doubt but the unbiassed mind will say: the belief that saves is belief in Christ for all He was, and is, and for all He did and suffered. Belief in Christ as God's incarnate self. Belief in Him as heaven's slain Lamb, who paid our debt to law. Belief in Him as the exalted intercessor. Belief in Him as the coming King of Glory. Belief *on* as well as in Him! A belief on Him which is full of repose, if not of rejoicing. A confidence in the keeping of all His promises. Such faith saves! It unites the soul to its Saviour. His heart-throbs become its pulse-beats. It will follow Him in the dark as if the day were shining and showing all things clearly. It cannot be more than cast down. It cannot be destroyed.

"My faith looks back to see,
The burdens Thou didst bear;
While hanging on the accursed tree,
And hopes her guilt was there."

THE LORD'S COMMAND FOR THE TIMES.

By Bishop J. C. Ryle, D.D. (Episcopal), Liverpool, England.

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.—Jer. vi., 16.

The book of the prophet Jeremiah receives from most Christians far less attention than it deserves. It is a noteworthy fact that hardly any portion of Holy Scripture is the subject of so few exhaustive commentaries and expositions.

I fail to see the reason of this comparative neglect. The book was written, under God's inspiration, by a Jewish priest in the last days of the kingdom of Judah. Jeremiah was God's messenger to a wicked king, a worldly aristocracy, a corrupt people, a rotten Church, and a dead, formal priesthood. He warned his countrymen faithfully, but, like Cassandra of old, he was not believed. He lived to see the crash and ruin of Church and State, the city burnt, the temple of Solomon destroyed, and the people carried into captivity. And, finally, it is a Christian tradition that, after being dragged into Egypt by the Jewish refugees, who fled there, he died the death of a martyr.

I repeat that the writings of such a prophet as this deserve more attention than they have hitherto received in this generation. I knew a man of God who made a great mark in his day, who often said to me, twenty-five years ago, that Jeremiah was pre-eminently a book for the latter days of England. To that opinion I entirely subscribe. Holding that opinion, I ask you to hear a few words about the text which I have chosen. I commend it to you as a text for the times.

I. First of all, you have in this text excellent general advice. Jeremiah says to you, "Stand, and see, and ask."

I take these words to be a call to thought and consideration. They are as though the prophet said, "Stop and think. Stand still, pause and reflect. Look within, behind and before. Do nothing rashly. What are you doing? Where are you going? What will be the end and consequence of your present line of action? Stop and think."

Now, to set men thinking is one great object which every teacher of religion should always keep before him. Serious thought, in short, is one of the first steps toward heaven. "I thought on my ways," says the Psalmist, "and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." (Ps. cxix., 59.) The prodigal son in the parable "came to himself" before he came to his father. He began to consider quietly the folly and uselessness of his conduct, and then, and not till then, he returned home saying, "Father I have sinned." (Luke xv., 17.) Want of thought is, in truth, the simple cause why many make shipwreck for ever. There are but few, I suspect, who deliberately and calmly choose evil,

refuse good, turn their backs on God, and resolve to serve sin as sin. The most part are what they are because they began their present course without thought. They would not take the trouble to look forward and consider the consequence of their conduct. By thoughtless actions they created habits which have become second nature to them. They have got into a groove now, and nothing but a special miracle of grace will stop them. That is a solemn charge which Isaiah brings against Israel: "My people doth not consider." (Isa. i., 3.) "I never gave it a thought," is the sad excuse which I have heard many a man and woman in the lower classes make for sin. The words of Hosea are strictly true of thousands: "They consider not in their hearts." (Hosea vii., 2.)

There are none, we must all be aware, who bring themselves into so much trouble by want of thinking as the young. From natural high spirits and ignorance of the world, they are always tempted to look only at the present and forget the future. Too often they marry in haste and repent at leisure, and lay up misery for life by wedding an uncongenial partner. Too often they choose in haste a wrong profession or business, and find, after two or three years, that they have made an irretrievable mistake, and, if I may borrow a railway phrase, have got on the wrong line of rails. Esau thought only of present gratification, and sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Dinah must needs go "to see the daughters of the land," thinking no harm, and ends by losing her own character, and bringing trouble on her father's house. Lot thought only of the present advantage of settling in the well-watered valley around Sodom, and forgot the consequence of being mingled with a people who were "sinners before God exceedingly." (Gen. xiii., 13.) All these found to their cost the folly of not considering, looking forward, and thinking. They sowed to the flesh, and they reaped a harvest of sorrow and disappointment, because they did not "stand and see."

These, no doubt, are ancient things. Every middle-aged person can shake his head over the foolishness of young people; and tell us mournfully that you "cannot put old heads on young shoulders." But the young are not the only persons who need the exhortation of the text in this day. It is pre-eminently advice for the times. Hurry is the characteristic of the age in which we live. Railways, and electric telegraphs, and general competition appear to oblige modern Englishmen to live in a constant, breathless whirl. On every side you see the many driving furiously, like Jehu, after business or politics. They seem unable to find time for calm, quiet, serious reflection about their souls and a world to come. They have no abstract objection to the doctrines of Christianity, or to the use of means of grace, the Bible, or private prayer. But, alas! they cannot make leisure for them. They live in a perpetual hurry, and in a hurry they too often die. If ever there was an age in England when Jeremiah's advice was needed, it is now. If the prophet could rise from the dead, I believe he would cry aloud to the men of the nineteenth century, "Stop and think, look forward, stand and see."

Let me, as Christ's minister, impress on all whom I address to-day the ab-

solute necessity of resisting the current of the age, the absolute necessity of making time for your souls. The restless high-pressure hurry in which men live, endangers the very foundations of personal religion. Daily private prayer and daily Bible-reading are too often jostled into a corner and hastily slurred over. Body and mind are wearied out, when Sunday arrives, by the intense struggle of week-day life. Church services are listlessly attended, and sometimes neglected altogether. The temptation to idle away God's day, or to spend it in visiting or dining out, becomes almost irresistible. Little by little the soul gets into a languid and relaxed condition, and the fine edge of conscience becomes blunt and dull. And why? Simply because in the incessant hurry of business and politics men never find time to think. They are not wilfully and of purpose irreligious; but they give themselves no leisure to stand still and take stock of the state of their souls.

Men and brethren, consider your ways. Beware of the infection of the times. Remember the old Spanish proverb, "Hurry comes from the devil." Resolve by the grace of God, if you love life, that you will have regular seasons for examining yourself, and looking over the accounts of your soul. "Stand, and see" where you are going, and how matters stand between you and God. Beware of perpetual hurried prayers, hurried Bible-reading, hurried church-going, hurried communions. Commune at least once a week with thine own heart, and be still. Cotton, and coal, and iron, and corn, and ships, and stocks, and land, and gold, and Liberalism, and Conservatism are not the only things for which we were sent into the world. Death and judgment, and eternity are not fancies, but stern realities. Make time to think about them. Stand still, and look them in the face. You will be obliged one day to take time to die, whether you are prepared or not. The last enemy, when he knocks at your door, will brook no delay, and will not wait for a convenient season. He must be admitted, and you will have to go. Happy is he who, when the roar of business and politics is dying away on his ear, and the unseen world is looming large, can say, "I know whom I have believed; I have often stood and communed with Him by faith; and now I go to see as I have been seen."

II. From the general advice which Jeremiah gives in our text, I shall now pass on to the particular direction which the Lord commands him to address to the men of his generation. If they were really willing to listen to his counsel to "stand and see," and consider their ways, then he bids them "ask for the old paths."

Now what did Jeremiah mean when he spoke of the "old paths"? I find no difficulty in answering that question. I feel no doubt that the phrase meant the old paths of faith in which the fathers of Israel had walked for thirteen hundred years—the paths of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the paths of Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel—the paths of David, and Solomon, and Hezekiah, and Jehoshaphat—the paths in which the rule of life was the decalogue, and the rule of worship was the elaborate typical, sacrificial system of which the essence was faith in a coming Redeemer. That this was the stand-

ard around which the men of Jeremiah's day were summoned to rally I shall never hesitate to maintain. Fallen and low as the spiritual condition of Israel often was, between the first of the judges and the last of the kings, I fail to see any proof that the ten commandments and the law of sacrifice were ever dethroned and repealed. On the contrary, I believe they were honored and revered by every Jew who was "an Israelite indeed." In the darkest days of the kings, I believe there were always a few who mourned secretly over the corrupt state of the nation, and, like Simeon and Anna, kept the faith and longed for better times. In a general return to the "old paths," and nothing short of the "old paths," Jeremiah declared, was the only prospect of hope for the future of his countrymen.

But is the principle laid down by Jeremiah a principle which applied to his own times alone? Nothing of the kind. I am firmly persuaded that one chief medicine for the spiritual diseases of the nineteenth century is a bold and unhesitating inquiry for old paths, old doctrines, and the faith of the days that are past. Error, no doubt, is often very ancient, yet truth is always old. Men's hearts are just what they were six thousand years ago, and need the same remedy. God in that long period has used several dispensations, and each succeeding age has enjoyed more light. But the foundation truths have always been the same, and the way by which sinners have reached heaven has always been one and the same. I say boldly that the age wants nothing new. What it wants is plain, distinct, unflinching teaching, about the "old paths." Give me no modern road of man's invention. Show me where patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, and fathers, and reformers, set down their feet, obtained a good report, and made a mark on the world. The old path is the good way.

We want throughout Christendom a return to the old paths of the early Christians. The first followers of the apostles, no doubt, were, like their teachers, "unlearned and ignorant men." They had no printed books. They had short creeds, and very simple forms of worship. I doubt much if they could have stood an examination in the Thirty-nine Articles, or the Creed of Athanasius, or even in the Church Catechism. But what they knew they knew thoroughly, believed intensely, and propagated unhesitatingly, with a burning enthusiasm. They grasped with both hands, and not with finger and thumb, the personality, the Deity, the offices, the mediation, the atoning work, the free and full grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the inseparable necessity of repentance, faith, and a Christ-like life of holiness, self-denial, and charity. On these truths they lived, and for them they were ready to die. Armed with these truths, without gold to bribe, or the sword to compel assent, they turned the world upside down, confounded the Greek and Roman philosophers, and altered in two or three centuries the whole face of society. Can we mend these old paths? Can we improve them after eighteen centuries? Does human nature require any different medicine? I believe the bones of the oldest human skeletons that ever were unearthed are just like the bones of men in these days; and I believe the moral nature and

hearts of men, after the lapse of ages, are just the same. We had better ask for the "old paths."

We want throughout the Church of England a return to the old paths of our Protestant reformers. I grant they were rough workmen and made some mistakes. They worked under immense difficulties, and deserve tender judgment and fair consideration. But they revived out of the dust grand foundation-truths, which have been long buried and forgotten. They brought into just prominence such cardinal verities as the sufficiency and supremacy of Scripture, the right and duty of private judgment, the free justification by faith without the deeds of the law, and without any ordained man or any ceremony interposing between the soul and the Saviour. By embalming those truths in our Articles and Liturgy, by incessantly impressing them on the attention of our forefathers, they changed the whole character of this nation, and raised a standard of true doctrine and practice, which, after three centuries, is a power in the land, and has an insensible influence on English character to this very day. Can we mend these old paths? Shall we improve them either by going back behind the Reformation and increasing the ceremonial of religion on one hand, or by adopting lower views of inspiration and atonement on the other? I doubt it entirely. I believe the men of three hundred years ago understood the real wants of human nature better than many do in 1884.

Of couse I am well aware that the old paths for which I have been pleading are not popular in some quarters at this day. In fact, the views I have just propounded are in direct antagonism to much of the so-called wisdom of these times. "Effete systems," "old-world creeds," "fossil theology," "exploded theories," "worn-out doctrines," "old-fashioned divinity," and the like phrases—who does not know the heavy fire of such language which is continually poured on the "old paths" of faith in some organs of public opinion, and from some pulpits and platforms? Novelty is the idol of the day. Free handling, enlightened views, rational interpretation, science (so-called) before the Bible—these are the guiding principles of many in this age. Tell them that any religious idea is old, and they seem to think it is probably false! Tell them that it is new, and it is probably true!

But I have yet to learn that all new views of religion are necessarily better than the old. It is not so in the work of man's hands. I doubt if this nineteenth century could produce an architect who could design better buildings than the Parthenon and Coliseum, or a mason who could rear fabrics which will last as long. It certainly is not so in the work of men's minds. Thucydides is not superseded by Macaulay, nor Homer by Milton. Why, then, are we to suppose that old theology is necessarily inferior to new?

For, after all, when modern scoffers at "old paths" and worn-out creeds have said their say, there remain some stern facts that can never be explained away, and some questions which can only receive one answer. I ask boldly, what extensive good has been done in the world except by the theology of the "old paths?" and I confidently challenge a reply, because I know that

none can be given. I affirm unhesitatingly that there never has been any spread of the Gospel, any conversion of nations and countries, any successful evangelistic work, except by the old-fashioned, distinct doctrines of the early Christians and the Reformers. I invite any opponent of dogmatic theology to name a single instance of a country, or town, or people which has ever been Christianized by merely telling men that "Christ was a great moral teacher; that they must love one another; that they must be true, and just, and unselfish, and generous, and brotherly, and high-souled," and the like. No! no! no! Not one single victory can such teaching show us, not one trophy can such teaching exhibit. It has wrought no deliverance on the earth. The victories of Christianity, wherever they have been won, have been won by distinct doctrinal theology; by telling men of Christ's vicarious death and sacrifice; by showing them Christ's substitution on the cross, and His precious blood; by teaching them justification by faith, and bidding them believe on a crucified Saviour; by preaching ruin by sin, redemption by Christ, regeneration by the Spirit; by lifting up the brazen serpent; by telling men to look and live—to believe, repent, and be converted. These are the "old paths." This, this is the only teaching which for eighteen centuries God has honored with success, and is honoring at the present day both at home and abroad. Let the teachers of the broad and undogmatic theology—or the preachers of the gospel of earnestness, and sincerity, and cold morality—or the advocates of a ceremonial, sensuous, histrionic, sacramentarian Christianity—let them, I say, show us at this day any English village or parish, or city, or district which has been evangelized without the distinct doctrinal teaching of the "old paths." They cannot do it, and they never will. There is no getting over facts. The good that is done in the earth may be comparatively small. Evil may abound, and ignorant impatience may murmur and cry out that Christianity has failed. But, we may depend upon it, if we want to do good and shake the world, we must fight with the old apostolic weapons, and stick to the "old paths."

Men and brethren, respect the logic of facts. Give the direction of Jeremiah the attention it deserves. If you once begin to think seriously about your souls, never be ashamed of asking for the "old paths" and walking in them. Yes; do not merely look at them and talk of them, but actually walk in them. Let no scorn of the world, let no ridicule of smart writers, let no snare of liberal critics, shake your confidence in those paths. Only try them, and you will find they are the good way, "a way of pleasantness and peace."

True Life.—There is no life which in the past has testified to the power and beauty of the Gospel, but what lives to-day and shall continue in our future, unfolding life. There has been no shrinking from duty or sluggishness, but what has left its impress on us; and on the other hand, no gift, no act of self-denial, which does not still work in us a beneficent power.—*Dr. R. S. Storrs.*

THE PRAYER OF KING SOLOMON FOR WISDOM TO GOVERN HIS PEOPLE.

By Professor Edward John Hamilton, D.D., in the Marquand Chapel, Princeton, New Jersey.

And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth or honor, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life, but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge My people over whom I have made thee king; wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee, and I will give thee riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.—II. Chronicles i., 11, 12.

The kingdom of the Hebrews, at the time of Solomon's accession to the throne, had risen to a wonderful height of prosperity and splendor. During the long and energetic reign of David, his father, every enemy had been subdued; all the neighboring nations had become tributary to the monarch at Jerusalem; his empire had spread northward so as to include the flourishing city of Damascus; on the south it had extended itself into the deserts of Arabia; the whole region between the Mediterranean Sea and the river Euphrates had come to acknowledge Hebrew supremacy; and, in short, the promise of the Lord to Abraham, that his seed should possess the land "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the River Euphrates," had been completely and literally fulfilled. Never, at any previous or at any subsequent time, was Israel so united, so powerful, and so prosperous a people. Within the borders of the Holy Land more than a million of valiant men stood ready to draw the sword for the defense of the empire and the maintenance of its rights, and military forces, distributed among the different subject nations, rendered sure their tribute and obedience. Such was the magnitude of the empire over which Solomon, in early manhood, was called to reign.

The kingdom of Israel, moreover, had a greatness of its own, entirely unlike that of any other kingdom of ancient or of modern times. For the Israelites were God's peculiar people, chosen out of all the nations in the world, that they might receive and preserve the sacred oracles of revelation, and that the true religion, neglected and forsaken by all the other inhabitants of earth, might find among them a home and a resting-place. It therefore added inconceivably to the weightiness of the office of the king of Israel that it was his first duty to maintain, in full authority and operation, the laws and ordinances which had been delivered to Moses from the Almighty's own mouth, and which had been thus directly ordained of Heaven in order to perpetuate truth and piety in Israel and to transmit to future ages the knowledge of the only true God.

If, along with these considerations, it be remembered that upon Solomon devolved the task of building to the Lord a temple, whose beauty and magnificence were for centuries the wonder and admiration of the world, the costliness of which employed the wealth even of nations, and whose grandeur made it a fit symbol of the local presence of the Great Jehovah, the divine lawgiver and judge and king of Israel, we shall see that the throne upon which David placed his son was a station demanding the highest exercise of the most exalted powers, and, indeed, that a post of greater responsibility has seldom fallen to any one in any age of the world.

If we also reflect that, at the time of Solomon's investiture with sovereign sway, he was a youth who had scarcely yet attained the full vigor of his manhood, it will become deeply interesting to us to enquire with what views and feelings the mind and heart of this youthful king were influenced, in regard to his high position. To this question the facts of Scripture history clearly warrant the reply that, whatever in later life may have been Solomon's deviations from duty and from the fear of the Lord, the early years of his reign evidence a mind keenly alive to all the necessities and responsibilities of his station, and a heart sincere in love and loyalty towards God. Of this statement the conduct of Solomon in the final inauguration of his government, and the request which he made of God immediately after that event, may furnish sufficient proof. After his kingdom had become completely established and the details of its administration settled, Solomon assembled all the elders and chief men of the nation before the tabernacle of the Lord at Gibeon; and there, for many days, the king and his people together solemnly invoked the blessing of the Most High. The smoke of the great altar of Gibeon continually ascended in volumes towards Heaven till one thousand burnt-offerings had been consumed with sacred fire. For thus Solomon would make confession of his own sins, and of the sins of his people; thus would he celebrate his faith in Christ's atonement; and thus would he express the desire that the prayers of Israel should continually ascend, in clouds of incense, towards the throne of God.

During the night which succeeded the close of these solemnities the Lord appeared in vision and signified His acceptance of the sacrificial service and His pleasure in the piety of Solomon, by inviting the king to ask of Him any gift that he might desire; and Solomon, thinking only of his weighty and responsible position, and fearing the inadequacy of his powers for the requirements of it, besought the Lord for wisdom to govern his people well; and immediately the Lord again testified His approval of the spirit and conduct of his servant. "Because," said He, "this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth or honor, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life, but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself that thou mayest judge My people over whom I have made thee king, wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee, and I will give thee riches and wealth and honor such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like."

In the present discourse I would direct attention to Solomon as displaying, on this memorable occasion, the spirit proper for every young man—and especially for every Christian young man—in entering upon the responsibilities of life; and, in particular, there are three prominent characteristics of the temper of his mind to which I would invite consideration as pre-eminently worthy of regard. The first of these is *his preferment of the welfare of the people over whom he ruled above any gratification or interest of his own;* the second is *the hearty conformity to the Divine will of his wishes concerning his position;* and the third is *his recognition of himself as weak and liable to err, and of God as the true source of wisdom and strength for the discharge of duty.*

I shall speak of these points in their order, and, first, in regard to *his preferment of the welfare of his people above any gratification or interest of his own.* From the manner in which the Lord offered the king any gift that his heart might desire, it is evident that Solomon was at perfect liberty, if such had been his choice, to request the fulfilment of some purely personal or private end. Now, if such an offer had been made to any of those mighty kings or conquerors whose names are blazoned in history, what would his choice have been? What prayer would have expressed the heart's desire of Alexander, or of Hannibal, of Cæsar, or of Napoleon? From the character and conduct of these men let us frame an answer. Alexander would have asked for another world to conquer; Hannibal would have sought satiety of vengeance in the extermination of the Italian foes; Cæsar would have demanded admittance among the gods, and the perpetual worship of the citizens of Rome; Napoleon, that his family should ever rule the destinies of France, and that France, of all nations, should ever be foremost and supreme. But the spirit of which the Lord approved in Solomon was free from all taint of ambitious or selfish or merciless desire. With him a far stronger motive than any personal end was the welfare of that great people over whom the Lord had made him king. If you would have convincing proof of this, listen to the words in which Solomon made his supplication. "O Lord my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father, and Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give, therefore, Thy servant an understanding heart, to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people?" Most admirable prayer! Would that the king of Israel, in his adherence to duty, his forgetfulness of self, and his concern for the public good, were emulated by all the magistrates of our land, from the highest to the lowest! Would that all to whom the interests of others are committed were ever animated with the spirit of Solomon!—that parents were not so frequently led, by the love of ease or the calls of business, to neglect the highest welfare of their children—that those in places of duty or of trust were not so often swayed by private gain to prove faithless to their charge—that those in positions of influence were less mindful of the paltry honors and opinions of the world, and more ready with countenance and aid for every enterprise tending to the glory of God and the good of man!

This prayer of Solomon's illustrates and embodies a moral principle of most comprehensive and far reaching authority. It teaches that no thought of our own pleasure or ease, honor or profit, nor any similar consideration, should be permitted to interfere with our duty towards those whose welfare is dependent on our efforts. And do you ask, "*Who may they be whose interests are thus involved in our exertions?*" "*Those,*" I reply, "*whom God, in any way, has put it in our power to serve.*" As the good Samaritan, at his own personal risk and expense, acted a neighborly part towards that Jewish stranger who lay stripped and bleeding on the road, so it is the spirit and teaching of the Gospel that, wherever we find our brother in need, while it is within our power to minister to his necessities, we should immediately and diligently apply ourselves to his relief. For nothing could be more diametrically opposed to the spirit of Christianity than the selfishness of that callous and haughty demand, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Disregard and sacrifice of self for the good of others are the very mind which brought the Saviour from the throne of Heaven to the Cross on Calvary, which urged the Apostles in unceasing exertions over the world, and which have ever animated the true Christian in benevolent and self-denying labors. Here, then, is a test of our Christianity which we shall do well to apply. Do we have a constant regard for the welfare of others rather than for our own, and especially do we exert ourselves, as opportunity may present, for their everlasting welfare? Are we willing to make every sacrifice to bring men to a knowledge of the truth? Are we unremitting in earnest prayer on their behalf? Do we exercise a proper influence for God in the social circle and in friendly intercourse? Do we, as occasion offers, speak a word to our brother concerning his hopes for Heaven? Alas! my friends, how are these duties neglected! How do the cares and pleasures and vanities of earth displace anxieties and efforts for immortal souls! Let us resolve, in dependence on the grace of God, that hereafter we shall be more diligent for the spiritual welfare of our friends and comrades, and more obedient to that holy law of forgetfulness of self and of devotedness to the good of others, which brought the Saviour from heaven, which sent the apostles throughout the earth, and which is binding, equally and alike, upon the occupant of the loftiest throne, and upon the lowest subject in his realm.

The second characteristic in the spirit of Solomon, particularized for present consideration, is *the hearty conformity to the Divine will of his wishes in regard to his position.* If any other monarch in the days of Solomon had received full liberty from the Lord to ask for himself whatever gift he might desire, and had chosen wisdom to rule his people according to the laws and will of God, his conduct, in so doing, would have been worthy of the highest praise. But in the lips of Solomon this prayer for wisdom had a most peculiar and comprehensive significance. For here we must remind ourselves once more that God had long since separated Israel from all the nations in the earth, to be a people for Himself—that, for many generations, He had guided their fortunes in the most singular and wonderful manner—that He had wrought for them

many great and mighty deliverances—that He had given them laws and institutions unlike those of any other people—that He constantly, as occasion required, directed their affairs by special revelations of His will—that, in fact, He was the Divine ruler of whom the earthly monarch of the Israelitish nation was but the representative vicegerent. When God promised any of the kings of Israel or of Judah the establishment of His throne and aid against His enemies, it was always provided that king should diligently observe the statutes and commandments and ordinances of the Lord. When He rejected Saul from being king over His people, it was not because Saul had proved himself unfaithful to the nation's welfare, but because *he* had rejected the word of the Lord, and had not kept the commandments which the Lord had commanded him. And, when David was raised to the throne of Israel, it was because of this testimony, given him of God: "I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, which shall fulfil all My will." Undoubtedly, therefore, what most of all pleased the Lord in Solomon, was that, when perfectly free to choose whatever his heart might desire, the youthful king, in most cordial acceptance of God's rule over Israel, earnestly besought wisdom for the proper discharge of his functions, not simply as a ruler, but as the representative servant and vicegerent of the Lord. For, throughout the prayer of Solomon, Israel is never mentioned as "*my people*," but repeatedly and emphatically as "*Thy people*," "*Thy people whom Thou hast chosen*," "*the people over whom Thou hast made me king*," "*Thy so great a people*;" and, in like manner, God, when conferring the reward, thus gives His reason for doing so, "*Because thou hast chosen wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge My people, over whom I have made thee king.*" Clearly it was the crowning excellence of that temper of mind which so signally elevated Solomon into the Divine favor, that he ardently desired to govern Israel, not as his own people, but as the people of the Lord; not according to any ways of his own, but according to the commandments and ordinances of the Lord; not for any ends of his own, but for those high purposes in order to whose accomplishment Israel had been chosen out of all nations and made the Lord's peculiar and consecrated people.

Nor can we doubt as to the main motive of Solomon, in thus identifying his wishes with the will of God; for, in the language of the inspired historian, "*Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father.*" The spirit of his prayer was not ambition to be the wisest monarch of his day, nor servile anxiety to secure the favor of a powerful friend; it was the desire to do the will of his infinitely wise and good and gracious Father in heaven, whom Solomon loved with a sincere and fervent heart. And, my hearers, this same spirit of loving and hearty conformity to the Divine will, has controlled the prayers and the lives of God's true people in all generations. This spirit made Abram, at the commandment of the Lord, leave country and kindred and father's house for a distant and unknown land; it enabled Joseph, in recognition of God's good providence, to enter with cheerful alacrity upon the position and duties of a slave; it inspirited Moses to forsake the pleasures and splendors of

a royal court for the care of flocks and herds amid the deserts of Midian; it urged Paul, bound in the spirit, onwards to Jerusalem, unmoved by the tears of friends or the sure foresight of afflictions, rejoicing to testify the Gospel of the grace of God; and it reigned in the heaving breast of our Redeemer, when, with the cross before His eyes, and in more than mortal agony, He prayed, "Not My will, but Thine, be done!" O what comfort in affliction, what support in trial, what delight in duty, spring from the thought, "It is the will of God"! Let us, my friends, cherish this spirit of hearty conformity to the Divine will, so that, whatever may be our station or lot in life, it may be our chief desire to live as God would have us live, and our constant happiness to reflect that all our affairs are guided by our Father's care and goodness. Let us never murmur at the dispensations of His providence, but in every event acknowledge gladly the hand of a faithful and covenant-keeping God. If our Father send affliction let us use the language of Eli: "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good." If he send blessing and honor, let us imitate the meekness of Mary: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word." Let us, like Solomon, make our most earnest prayers for what we know to be desired of our Heavenly Father, and, in all things else, commit our fortunes to infinite wisdom and boundless love. In short, let us obey the words of Jesus: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The third, and last, of those characteristics in the spirit of Solomon which were selected as topics of discourse, was *his recognition of himself as weak and liable to err, and of God as the great source of wisdom and strength for the discharge of duty.* In the humility and diffidence of Solomon we have an example of what seems to be commonly the case, that men of worth and of ability are the most deeply conscious of their deficiencies and faults. For here we should free our minds from any belief that Solomon, previously to the gift of wisdom, was a man undistinguished for character or attainment. Everything recorded of him proves precisely the reverse. Named from birth Jedidiah, he was the beloved of the Lord; preferred by David above many elder brothers to the inheritance of the throne, he was trained from childhood under the expectation of future monarchy; and, already well versed in the affairs of government, we behold him in his prayer for wisdom performing an act of wisdom which all the meditations of his after years could never have improved. Then, too, the judgment and fearless vigor with which, on his accession, he seized the reins of empire, executed long delayed justice upon daring and powerful criminals, and thoroughly reorganized his government, argue a mind capable of great things—a spirit born to command. Yet, notwithstanding all this superiority of Solomon, what, save humility and conscious weakness, can be found in those words of prayer, "O Lord, I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or to come in!" Utterly different from such a spirit was that of the son and successor of Solomon, on assuming the scepter. For, while these two men were both brought up amid the incitements to good and the seductions to evil which surround the heir of royalty, in the

father we find a youth of twenty years rather humbled than uplifted by his greatness, and in the son a man of twice that age displaying a proud and arrogant confidence which lost him the greater part of his dominions.

What should be most admired, however, in Solomon, is that he evidenced his sense of weakness—not by shrinking from his duties—but by *seeking God's help for the performance of them.* You remember that, when Elisha, the follower and successor of Elijah, was awaiting with his master that chariot of fire which should now, within a few moments, terminate their earthly companionship, Elijah said to his servant, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee." And Elisha, trembling to think how soon he should be called to wear the mantle of the greatest of the prophets, besought a double portion of his master's spirit. In a very similar frame did Solomon, when offered whatever he might desire, pray for an understanding heart to judge the people of the Lord. He felt how unequal were the limited and fallible powers of man to the necessities of a station perhaps then the loftiest on earth, and he looked for aid to Him *who giveth wisdom unto the wise and knowledge unto them that know understanding.* Thus he made the Lord his strength, and put his trust in the mighty one of Jacob.

My hearers, to be conscious of our own weakness, and to be sensible that renewal of inward excellence is first and chiefly to be sought from Him Who, at the beginning, created in perfection the intellect and heart of man, and, especially in matters of duty, to distrust ourselves, and to place confidence in God, are the elements of a spirit without which no one should enter upon any station. Who, that knows the sinful weakness of the human heart, will not sometimes shudder to think of the crimes and follies into which he might have fallen had not some heavenly power upheld him, almost against his will? And, if this be true concerning the common duties of life, how much more is it the case in religion! If God's help is to be earnestly desired in those moral duties which nature has given us some ability to perform, how absolutely essential it is to the discharge of those spiritual duties for which, by nature, we are utterly impotent! If we would render God the acceptable adoration and service of heart and life, let us cast away all trust in fancied strength of our own, and put our dependence in divine grace. So shall Omnipotence be pledged for our support.

Having endeavored to set forth the excellence of the spirit of Solomon in his regard for the welfare of his people, his hearty conformity to the will of God, and his looking to divine power for the succor of his weakness, I cannot conclude without expressing the hope that the present discourse, by exciting in us a somewhat similar spirit, may lead us also to put up a prayer in some degree resembling Solomon's. God, indeed, has not offered us, as He did His servant of old, whatever we may request. He has not even unconditionally promised to grant such powers, of mind or of body, as may by needful to the success we may desire in some particular station of life or sphere of usefulness. We should, therefore, limit every petition for such blessings by saying "If so it seem best to Thee, O Father Almighty." Nevertheless *there is a*

wisdom of inestimable worth which God has promised to all who ask it of him aright. It is beyond the price of rubies; it is not to be compared with heaps of finest gold. And it is a wisdom which, beyond any other gift, qualifies and inspirits men to live so as best to promote the good of others; which conforms them, daily more and more, to the divine will; which, in truth, is a new and wonderful power—a direct and special gift of Heaven—both showing to us the path of duty and constraining and persuading us to walk therein. It is the wisdom founded on the knowledge of things spiritual and divine, and whereby rational, immortal, redeemed man lives worthy of his relations to the infinite God. It is true religion, the wisdom that cometh from above, and which they—and they alone—possess, who believe and obey the truth, as revealed in the glorious and everlasting Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

My dear young friends, is it your desire to live, according to the Christian rule, for the welfare of others rather than for your own? Here is a wisdom which not only, by divine precept and example, inspires men to labor for the good of others, but which also imparts the knowledge and the spirit requisite to successful effort in the interest of immortal souls. Have you the anxiety to be conformed in all things to the will of your Heavenly Father? Here is the only wisdom by which we can see clearly, and obey heartily, God's will concerning our duties in this life and our everlasting salvation in the life to come. And do you feel your own weakness rightly to accept divine truth, and the need that this heavenly wisdom should be given you of God? *He has promised it freely to all who ask it of him in such a spirit.* And—believe me—if we sincerely beseech our Father for this wisdom, He not only will grant it to our prayer, but *He will also accompany it with a great reward.* He may not, indeed, confer upon us, as upon King Solomon, an abundance of temporal blessings; for, to His perfect judgment, the unalloyed prosperity of earth is not at all what is best for His children. Nevertheless our reward shall be conferred as surely as was Solomon's; *and it shall be infinitely greater.* For, when, in his sacred word, God promises eternal life and the blessedness of Heaven to all who believe in the Gospel of His Son, has He not annexed this life and blessedness to the exercise of that Heaven-sent wisdom which receives and obeys the truth? Let us, then, come boldly to our Father's throne, seeking the influences of His benign and holy Spirit, that those of us who may have already experienced the preciousness of Christian truth, may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, and that those who may never yet have been brought to the heartfelt apprehension of the Gospel, may, at last, become wise unto salvation!

The Guide.—Let no passing fashion mislead you. Let God be your guide in the building of the vessel in which you expect to cross the ocean of life, and enter eternity without wreck. Use no timber that will not bear storm. Never sleep while you skirt the reefs.—*Joseph Cook.*

The Pulpit Treasury

Conducted by a corps of eminent Clergymen.

J. SANDERSON, D.D., MANAGING EDITOR.

E. B. TREAT, Publisher,

NEW YORK, 757 BROADWAY.

Vol. I. APRIL, 1884. No. 12.

Yearly, in advance, - -	$2.50
Clergymen, - - -	2.00
Single Copies, - - -	.25

Any one forwarding four subscriptions and Ten Dollars will have the PULPIT TREASURY one year FREE.

These rates include postage.

Our First Annual Valedictory.—One year in the life of an individual is of vast moment. It forms a large fractional part of the whole earthly existence and an important period in the formation of the character. These facts are no less true in the origin and progress of a magazine. How it commences its career and what characterizes its monthly issues during its first year stamps, in a great measure, its qualities before the public and gives it its reputation in the world. Judged by this standard THE PULPIT TREASURY claims the congratulations of every friend of Christ's cause.

It originated in the hearts and minds of some of the best men in the land—lovers of the truth, valiant defenders of the faith, successful preachers of the cross, and men whose hand and tongue and pen are ready to assist in every good work. And from the issue of the first number till this one with which our first year closes, there has been coming to us from all quarters a continuous stream of words of commendation, cheer and blessing. Our work has won the approbation of all classes of Christian workers in all the evangelical denominations, and nothing has come to us but unsolicited testimonials of unqualified praise. And yet we are conscious there are imperfections in our work, that there is a much higher ideal to which we can attain, and that through the facilities which we now possess for progress in excellence and from the promised aid from a large number of the best writers in all lands on the topics embraced in the various departments of our magazine, the year upon which we are now to enter will be one of great improvement—richer in thought, more varied in matter, more comprehensive in subjects and in all things in advance of the past.

With sunny memories of our work during the past year, with many thanks to our patrons and readers in all lands, and with bright anticipations of the progress that awaits us in the future, we say to the past, *vale, vale!*

Sanctified Common Sense.—There is, perhaps, no qualification more requisite for any Christian worker than what is expressed by these words. It will supply the lack of several others, guiding him in the mode of treating subjects presented for consideration, and not only in the form of the truth set forth, but in taking advantage of the most seasonable opportunity and in putting it in the most judicious manner. This applies to pastors, Sabbath-school teachers, and to all who would speak a word for Jesus. How often is a pastor's holy ingenuity tested in the visitation of his flock, to so win the confidence and regard of some one who is estranged from him, the Church and truth, that he shall see that the door is opened to his mind, and probably to his heart, for a word in season. A similar sanctified skill is needed by all who would work for Jesus in any place or in any way. This blessed tact can be acquired, should be sought for at the

throne of grace as any other blessing, and should be cultivated by all who would win souls to Christ.

Stagnant Piety.—We fear there is much of this unhealthy sanctity in the religious world. While there is much activity displayed by large numbers of members in the churches of all the evangelical denominations, yet in view of the great mass of those whose names are on the church records it may well be asked—what are these among so many? Vast numbers have a name to live; are registered upon church records as living, and yet give no signs of life save in an occasional attendance upon the public services of the sanctuary on the Lord's day. The world has scummed them over with its vile and worthless covering, making them an offence to God, a dishonor to His cause, and a stumbling-block to the weaklings in the faith. There is no healthiness in such religion. It makes the very waters of life, which may yet live in the soul, brackish; saturated with poisonous elements and affording no refreshment to the spirit. The only remedy is activity—activity in the closet, in the family, in the Church and in the world for Christ. This will clarify the uncleanness, sweeten the waters, make them a blessing as they flow and give an assured evidence that they have come from out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

"Go on with Your Work."—What cheering words to come to a Christian worker discouraged from any cause. The causes are many which lower his spirits, darken his prospects and make his hands to hang down. Sometimes it is the coldness of friends or the opposition of enemies; at other times it is the sickness, removal or death of one who has been a standard bearer in the field, or of one whose sympathies and words of cheer were more precious than gold; or the dispiritment may be the result of the small measure of success attending the most assiduous and prayerful toil. But whatever may have caused the dispiritment, it is removed by the voice of the Master speaking through some providence or some text of Scripture impressing upon the heart the words, "Go on with your work and I will be with you." His presence and His command are enough to give "the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." And may not every sincere, faithful worker for the Master, no matter in what field may be his labor, brace himself by the assurance, that such a promise is in substance on permanent record for his encouragement in the sacred page and that nothing can detract from its timely, suitable, cheering comfort?

To our Readers.—Every subscriber to THE PULPIT TREASURY should commence with Vol. I., No. 1, and obtain each successive number, as each yearly volume will be carefully and thoroughly indexed by *Authors Topics*, *Subjects* and *Texts*. Back numbers supplied at 20 cents each. Uniform case for binding yearly volume, 25 cents by mail. Bound volume, $3.00. Bound volume to Clergymen, $2.50.

A Word to our Readers.—The readers of THE PULPIT TREASURY are duly informed of the progress of The Chautauqua School of Theology and of The American Institute of Christian Philosophy. Both these institutions are doing a grand work in the dissemination of valuable literature; and thus affording facilities for keeping abreast with the theological cultus of the times. We are happy to announce that THE PULPIT TREASURY will also be the Medium of Intercourse between the *American Institute of Hebrew* and its patrons. This Institute is doing an excellent work in popularizing the study of Hebrew.

We are obliged to hold over the concluding portion of Bishop Foss' excellent article till the May number.

PARK STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, BOSTON, MASS.

Society organized 1809. Edifice erected 1810. Lots cost $21,000; Building $50,000; Repaired 1878 at an expense of $15,000. Seating Capacity 1,200. Dimensions 80 x 118. Height of Spire 218 feet. JOHN LINDSAY WITHROW, D.D., Pastor.

John Lindsay Withrow, D.D.

By Editor.

The portrait of the Rev. John Lindsay Withrow, D.D., pastor of the old historic Park Street Church, Boston, Mass., forms a suitable frontispiece with which to adorn the last number of the first year of The Pulpit Treasury.

Dr. Withrow was born at Coatesville, Chester County, Pennsylvania, March 13th, 1837. His parents, like many in that district of the country, were of Scotch-Irish descent, well indoctrinated in the truths of the Bible and in the principles of Presbyterianism. Their son was trained in the ways of these thrifty, industrious, church-going, God-fearing people, and gave early promise that his genial disposition, bright talents and increasing learning were all under the hallowing influence of the Holy Spirit and were unreservedly consecrated to God.

He entered the College of New Jersey, Princeton, in 1857 and was graduated in 1860. The three succeeding years were devoted to the study of divinity, in the Theological Seminary in the same town. So popular was the young divine that before the close of his Seminary course two calls were made upon him for his services as pastor. A unanimous one from the large and flourishing First Presbyterian Church of Wilmington, Delaware, offering a large salary and many other inducements. The other from a small church at Abington, near Philadelphia, where there was little harmony, a small salary, a dilapidated edifice and few attractions. This call Dr. Withrow was conscientiously constrained to accept, entering upon his work with the zeal of a young minister possessed with his first love, maintaining his loyalty to his Government in the midst of much opposition, and pushing forward in his pastoral work with the earnestness of a true ambassador for Christ. The effect was notable in largely increased audiences, many additions to the membership and augmented liberality. In 1865 a movement for a new church building was inaugurated, and the edifice erected at a cost of thirty thousand dollars raised entirely by the pastor.

During this period three unanimous calls were made upon him from important churches in other cities which were promptly declined. In 1868 the Arch Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, which had among its former pastors Drs. Skinner and Wadsworth, gave him a call which he accepted, being then only thirty-one years of age. Here, too, his popularity became very conspicuous. His success even in that church was unprecedented in large congregations, increased pew-rentals, and abounding contributions to various objects. When only two years its pastor, a parsonage was purchased for his use, and in 1872 the expenses of a European trip both for himself and his wife were defrayed by the congregation. In his absence Lafayette College conferred upon him the title of D.D. In the following year he was made a Trustee of Lincoln University and of the Presbyterian Hospital of Philadelphia and a member of the Board of Education of the Presbyterian Church. The Second Presbyterian Church of Indianapolis, after repeated calls upon him for his services, secured him as a pastor in 1873. In this new field great prosperity attended his preaching and other labors. The pew-rentals rose from two thousand to over eleven thousand dollars, and forty thousand dollars were spent in repairs of church and building of parsonage. The congregations were greatly enlarged, numerous accessions were made steadily to the membership and several weak churches were materially strengthened by pecuniary contributions. But he was not permitted to remain long in this sphere of labor. Park Street Congregational Church, Boston, from various causes was at this period—1876—struggling with what appeared to many, insuperable difficulties, and hearing of the heroic efforts made by Dr. Withrow in several

fields, extended to him a unanimous call. This was accepted and his pastorate with that church began on the first Sabbath of September, 1876. This old historic church, strange to say, had always been encumbered with debt, but with the prosperity which attended the coming of Dr. Withrow, and with the spirit which he infused into the congregation, now filling the seating capacity of the edifice, the debt was soon completely extinguished and fifteen thousand dollars besides raised and expended in repairing and beautifying the noble sanctuary in which so many of Boston's nobility have worshipped. Nor did this great effort exhaust the generosity of the people; it only opened their purses wide enough for larger contributions to flow into various other benevolent channels, so that Park Street Church stands only second in the Congregational churches of the country in the amount of its liberality to missionary and other similar objects at home and abroad. His success in Boston as elsewhere has been almost phenomenal. Current receipts year by year now more than exceed current expenses. Never in the history of the church has the Sunday-school been so large. The weekly conference and prayer-meeting has an exceptionally full attendance, with an interest deeply spiritual and earnest. And it is both worthy of note and congratulation that during the eight years of his pastorate there has been absolutely unbroken harmony in the congregation.

Dr. Withrow is a great favorite with churches of other denominations and receives from them many tokens of their esteem. His own church has shown its confidence and regard by placing him as a member upon three of its boards of benevolence and upon two of its executive committees.

Dr. Withrow uses his pen to good effect in contributing to several newspapers, and his influence is felt by a large circle of young men, who love him as they would a father, and some of whom of rare promise are through his instrumentality preparing for the ministry in several colleges. These few sentences only give the barest outline of the life of this grand gospel minister of Jesus Christ. It is not only a pleasure to record these facts, but it is even a delight to look upon him whether in the social circle or at the sacred desk. In person he is tall, erect, of well proportioned form, with an oval, clean-shaven face and hair now somewhat inclined to be silver-gray. His bearing is noble and dignified, the expression of his face sweet, genial and attractive, and his manners as winning as were possibly those of the beloved disciple. His sermons are prepared with great care, manifest a thorough acquaintance with Bible truth, are decided in the statement of evangelical doctrine and show that the Gospel will not suffer in its fulness at his hands. His delivery is pleasing, earnest, graceful, bold and finished. The hearer does not long wonder that his popularity everywhere has been so great, that he has in every place won many souls for Christ, and that he stands forth in Park Street Church, in Boston, a noble defender of the truth as it is in Jesus, an able minister of the New Testament—a Boanerges and a Barnabas in one.

Leading Thoughts of Sermons

The Perpetuity of Memory.

By J. H. Barrows, D.D. (Presbyterian), Chicago, Ill.

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.—Luke xvi., 25.

Memory plays a vast part in life by way of warning and instruction. It is but natural that it should play a vast part in the future life by the way of punishment. In this world oftentimes memory and joy are incompatible. They will not live together. Men put oceans between them and the scenes which stir up the memory of sin or suffering. Men sell the home where a wife or child died and

move elsewhere. Events like these are so linked with special localities that human nature demands that the circumstances be changed in order that memory may grow dull. But how often, when recollection has almost died, will something bring it to life again, as a lock of hair, a faded rose-leaf, an old book, a familiar seat in church, a soiled picture. Hardened men go back to a mother's grave and weep bitter tears, for thronging memories are there. The great people's poet of the world tells us the same truth in the song which all the world knows, especially in the lines:

> Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
> That wanton'st through the flowering thorn;
> Thou mind'st me of departed joys,
> Departed, never to return.

Dante puts into Francesca's lips these words: "There is no greater sorrow than to be mindful of the happy time in misery;" or, as Tennyson repeats the same pathetic experience:

> This is truth the poet sings,
> That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is
> Remembering happier things.

Shakspeare always fastened on memory as the chief element in the remorse of his great characters who have greatly sinned and in the agony of those who have greatly suffered. It is memory which breaks the heart of crazed King Lear amid the howling tempest. It is memory which tortures poor, noble Othello. Of Shakspeare's truant murderers it may be said that memory lashes them with whips of scorpions. Macbeth writhes before Banquo's ghost shaking his gory locks at him. Hamlet's uncle faces in terror the offense which had the primal eldest curse upon it, a brother's murder. And when Richard III., in his tent the night before Bosworth's battle, is brought to front the ghosts of the murdered princes and the murdered wife, as the panorama of his wicked career, painted in blood, moves before him, his remorse-smitten soul cries out:

> O, coward conscience, how thou dost afflict us!
> Cold, fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
> What? do I fear myself? There is none else by.
> Is there a murderer here? No. Yes. I am.
> Then fly! What? fly from myself?

Neither Jeremy Taylor nor John Bunyan ever preached like that. Kings are men, and you and I have their experiences. Let any man be called to see his own bad past in some hour of tremendous fear, and he knows somewhat that Macbeth and Richard knew. The Holy Ghost convinceth of sin, and how often men whose actions were as good as ours have been brought low by reviewing their own interior lives in the more than calcium light of the fire of God! If memory is so potent in this life, shall its power be lost in the next?

That its power is not lost in the next is the repeated teaching of Christ. In the description of the judgment we are taught that the mind reverts to this present life and calls up events which then and there occurred. Paul also teaches that our knowledge in the other life is to be God's knowledge of us now, without imperfection or obscurity. How often we say, "Well, the thing is past and that is the end of it. It is forgotten and will never be brought to mind again." Not so. Every idle word shall be brought into judgment. Every deed of darkness, known only to ourselves, shall be brought to light and proclaimed from the house-tops of memory. Every meanness and every wickedness, which we think erased from the record of things, is kept in a book of remembrance, and that book is our own minds, and it shall all be lived over again and again.

It is the teaching of modern science that no force is lost in the universe. It may be changed into other forces, but its equivalent is perpetuated. Heat becomes motion, and motion stopped becomes heat. Hence any change in the universe must affect every part of the universe. The jar of the present moment shakes the world, and, Proctor says, all worlds. By your voice you set in motion currents of air which meet on the other side of the globe. No man can speak blasphemy or foulness even in privacy without having the whole universe for an audience. We are moved upon by physical influences, born ages ago, in the remotest domain of space. In like manner the forces which originate in this world affect all worlds. Nothing is lost in the hard domain of matter. Is it likely that anything is lost in the sensitive realm of mind?

Do not think that the mental history of your life is to be lost. Great libraries have been lost and scholars have wept, but the book of the human soul has not yet been destroyed, and all its obscure passages will yet be illumined. We forget nothing in this life. All that is needed is a sensation strong enough to bring the past to life. The judgment bar of Christ will make us remember. This night's choice of God or decision to reject His mercy in Christ you are to contemplate in the light of eternity. What a terrible retribution would be the giving of a lost soul to the contemplation of himself. With what anguish would he look on his own vanquished years. "Sad memory weaves no veil to hide the past." Hour after hour, year after year the past life is unfolded, and in the midst of that past he beholds the form of Jesus and seems to hear His words of sorrow and of doom: "All thy life long have I stretched forth my hands to thee—and thou wouldst not."

Abraham's Prayer for Sodom.

By Rev. Alfred H. Moment, Spring St. Presbyterian Church, N. Y.

Abraham drew near, and said, wilt Thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?—Genesis xviii., 23-32.

This wonderful prayer has in its compass, the essential elements of true intercession.

I. Humility. Listen to the memorable words, v. 27: "I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but *dust* and *ashes*." Remember it was the great Abraham who made this confession—a man in whom the confidence of heaven reposed. If any one could have claimed high valuation of character, the grand old patriarch of Mamre might have. But, weighing himself in the divine balances, he confesses to be as light as *dust;* beholding himself through the divine eyes, he declares that he is worthless as to all human merit, as "the residue of a consumed substance."

These words give a fine description of man. He may have a lordly mind—a heart enriched with a thousand noble impulses—powers to exalt him as a prince among his fellows—resources of soul, that may bring to him the loudest calls of heaven and earth—yet, he is but "*dust* and *ashes*."

Humility is a tree yielding golden fruit. Here we find (1) the fruit of profound *reverence* for God. The prayer is full of it. Everywhere we find words implying holy awe—an anxiety lest the dignity and sacredness of Jehovah might be intruded upon. (2) *Love for others.* Be it remembered that the prayer was for Sodom! O for a humble heart, that we may have *charity!*

II. The star of faith shines brilliantly in this arch of intercession. (1) Abraham had faith in *God's moral government*, v. 25: "*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*" What a confidence to possess! Have we such holy reliance? With cloud, confusion, chaos, on every hand, have we the clear eye of faith to look up and exclaim in the ear of doubt and unbelief, "Righteousness shall yet prevail because the Judge of all the earth does right"? (2) The patriarch had faith in *God's mercy.* This is the ground of every petition. (3) He had faith, also, in the judgments of the Almighty being executed, except *a method of mercy* could be provided. This is more than most men believe to-day. (4) In the last place, Abraham had faith in the *righteous being the salt of the earth.* Hoping for their presence in the doomed cities, he sought to have all the inhabitants thereof saved.

III. Behold, also, in this passage, the true spirit of prayer. The petitioner is in *dead earnest.* Every word is full of holy passion. In each succeeding petition, we see a loftier enthusiasm. Seizing the horns of the altar—taking heaven by violence—the soul grows more and more fearless, until one might think his incessant solicitation would carry him beyond divine forbearance. Behold in this enthusiasm—this burning *importunity*—the sort of prayers we should daily offer to our heavenly Father!

IV. With such choice elements before us, we may reasonably look for fine results. Here are six distinct petitions. Here, also, are an equal number of an-

swers! Not a single request refused! As long as Abraham asks, the Lord answers! If the patriarch *could have* gone on, Jehovah *would have* gone on!

O the efficacy of prayer! O the inexhaustible fulness of Grace!

An Object-Lesson for the Sinner.

By P. S. Henson, D.D., First Baptist Church, Chicago, Ill.

Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.—II. Kings v., 14.

Leprosy is like sin. It is born in the blood, tainting and polluting mankind. Leprosy is a progressive, infectious, loathsome disease, the most disgusting of all ailments. The text refers to the captain of the host of the king of Syria, who was great in all that a man could call great, rich in the world's goods, and a mighty man in the land in which he lived, but was, nevertheless, a leper. Of how many great men it might be said that they are rich, eloquent, famous, distinguished, honored; but, after all, those who have the knowledge of God, although poor, and without the marks of fame, would not exchange with them. Naaman was delivered over unto death, and the little maid that was brought away from the land of Israel a captive had her heart touched when she saw that he was doomed, and said: "Would to God he were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him." She knew that God's influence could be brought to bear and that Naaman might be restored. He went to the king of Israel, loaded with riches, but the king said he could do nothing for the leper. Elisha heard of the distress of the king because he could do nothing, and asked that Naaman might be sent to him. Naaman went, and Elisha sent a servant to tell him what to do. If it had been a poor, wayfaring man, Elisha would have gone out. He knew that the haughty general needed a lesson, and that he, as the servant of the Lord, should teach it to him. Naaman became enraged when a servant told him what Elisha said, but his own servants prevailed upon him, and he went and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan and came forth with his flesh as that of a little child. This is history, and is a parable. In Naaman we have a picture of the condition of the sinner. One may have youth, health, wealth, hope, fame; but if he have sin, he has something that casts a cloud over his entire life. To be a sinner is to live a living death. One may be able to blind the dim eyes of men, but to God he is a loathsome monster full of leprosy. The pleasures of sin furnish no real joy, no solid satisfaction. One may be surrounded by home, wealth, beauty; but if he is a sinner, he is a leper. Riches and honor count nothing. God uses means to accomplish His ends. In the case of the little child, who told Naaman and his wife of the prophet, she bore herself so as to win confidence; the glow of her innocence and purity assured them; they believed in her.

There are those who are led to forsake sin by little children. Sometimes it may be a dead child whom the eyes are strained to see and to discover where it has gone. Perhaps its little voice can be heard calling those left behind to come up higher. There are many people who have leprosy, but they want to have a good time before they seek salvation. Can they have good times as lepers—as sinners? Naaman began to have a good time when his flesh became as a little child's. He first went to the king—to the wrong place. So it is with sinners; they go in the wrong direction. There is too much haughty pride in sinners to serve God. Unsubdued pride must come down before the sinner can be healed. God deals with the proud and the abandoned alike. It is easier for a poor man than a wealthy one to forsake sin, because the wealthy must have a fall first. Naaman thought the process too simple. Men are willing to attain unto salvation, but they turn away from the simple, easy plan which God has laid down. Naaman expected that Elisha would cure his leprosy by laying on hands, incantations, invocations, and holy mummery; but salvation did not come to him as he thought. It never does. Religion is not a matter of notion;

it is of divine revelation, and comes in its own quiet way. People are not converted alike, but the sweetness of salvation is the same to all. Naaman expected the prophet to do it all, not realizing that he must be humble and obey to be cured; but he was cured in the very act of obedience. So it is with the sinner. As he goes forth in the path of obedience, he is healed and purified from sin. Man must be obedient and God will cleanse him. He must resolve that he will trust in the Lord, and he will be met by a full recognition of the saving power of God. The prophet spoke to Naaman by the power of the Lord, and he dipped the seventh time in faith and was healed.

MUNDANE VERSUS COSMIC CULTURE.

AN ADDRESS BY BISHOP CYRUS D. FOSS, D.D., LL.D., AT THE DEDICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY HALL AND LABORATORY BUILDING, HAMLINE UNIVERSITY, HAMLINE, MINN., JANUARY 30TH, 1884.

No. II.

II. The objections to this mundane culture which I have thus indicated, will more fully appear and others will be suggested if we now pass on to consider what I have termed Cosmic Culture; by which I mean, the culture of the whole man in view of all his relations present and future; especially in view of these most momentous facts that he is a sinful being designed for holiness and a mortal destined to immortality.

Let me fasten your attention on two very striking, and if they were not so familiar, we should call them startling facts. 1. That all over the world and all down the ages men have been longing, yearning, striving after perfection of knowledge and character; and, 2. That, always and everywhere their sense of failure in this search has been most signal and their disappointment most bitter.

I speak not now of the masses of the ignorant and the vicious, but of the typemen of the race, those who have guided its development and who have filled its literature, poetry, history and philosophy with their queries and theories. How they have longed for the *summum bonum*, the philosopher's stone, the Golden Age. Look at the struggles of the master minds of the race with this mighty problem; struggles, the despair of which is now and then relieved by a faint fore-gleaming of the dawn, as in the case of Plato, who in his Phædo says:

"One ought, with respect to these things (*i. e.*, religious truth), either to learn from others how they stand, or to discover them for one's self; or, if both these are impossible, then taking the best of human words and that which is most difficult of refutation, and embarking on this as one risks himself on a raft so to sail through life. But would it were possible to go through more safely and with less risk, on a stronger raft of some divine word."

Ages before his time there had been in the world a few scattered copies of a parchment manuscript which he never saw. Would he might have seen it! It would have been to him "a stronger raft" and a "divine word."

It is called the book of Job. See how vividly it portrayed Plato's and the world's most perplexing puzzle and then solves it.

But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?

Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.

The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith, It is not with me.

It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.

Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?

God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof.

And unto man He said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Alas that men who have this book of Job and all the other books of the Bible, and some who profess to believe them divine should still prate of culture as though God and the Bible could be left out of it, or made something less than all-pervading in it.

Note now another very instructive fact. Men of this sort are from time to time driven by an internal compulsion to pay their homage to what they will not admit to be the book of God, as being at least the god of books. Denying its divine authority, representing that it is full of errors, they are yet constrained to admit its peerless magnificence and to do homage to its incomparable majesty. It wants only the barest scientific honesty to extort from any intelligent skeptic the fullest concession of the unique and stupendous power of the Bible in moulding the history and literature of the modern world. I do not propose to give you now the testimony of strenuous believers, but of famous unbelievers—and first of the arch-infidel of America:

Theodore Parker: "This collection of books has taken such hold of the world as no other. The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from the land or temples and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this book from a nation despised alike in ancient and in modern times. . . . It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar, and colors the talk of the streets. It enters men's closets, and mingles in all the grief and cheerfulness of life. Some thousand famous writers come up in this century to be forgotten in the next. But the silver cord of the Bible is not loosed, nor its golden bowl broken, as Time chronicles his tens of centuries passed by."

Prof. Huxley says:

"I have always been strongly in favor of secular education, in the sense of education without theology; but I must confess I have been no less seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of conduct, was to be kept up, in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters, without the use of the Bible. The pagan moralists lack life and color, and even the noble Stoic, Marcus Antoninus, is too high and refined for an ordinary child. Take the Bible as a whole; make the severest deductions which fair criticism can dictate for shortcomings and positive errors; and there still remains in this old literature a vast residuum of moral beauty and grandeur. By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized, and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval between two eternities; and earns the blessings or curses of all time, according to its efforts to do good and hate evil; even as they also are earning their payment for their work?"

Surely these tributes are honest. And now, by what right, let me demand, do such men keep the Bible out of any grade or scheme of education? Making such concessions of its supreme excellence, why do they not use it as it deserves, they themselves being judges?

How grandly do such testimonies of these giant unbelievers save us the necessity of even listening to the paltry prattle of pigmy skeptics who talk of the Bible as dwarfing the intellect and opposing its culture! No other force on earth has done a tithe as much to quicken the intellect. It has not been the Bible which has stood in the way of science but, its misinterpretations; not the Church, but the world in the Church; not religion, but the sin remaining in the stolid, ignorant, superstitious devotees of religion.

"Dwarfing the intellect!" Has this "scientific age" outgrown Shakspeare and Milton; or has it rather distinguished itself by climbing to a better appreciation of their marvellous genius than any other age since their time? Well, they had not outgrown the Bible. Take from the almost inspired practical wisdom of the one and from the majestic eloquence of the other what they owed to this universal classic and you destroy their writings.

It is time for us to notice more specifically the attitude of this great classic toward that cosmic culture, the need of

which our study of human nature abundantly reveals.

Our attention is immediately arrested by the fact that the author of this book is no specialist. He does not point out a single field of inquiry and bid us limit ourselves to that. He does not cleave the human soul asunder and teach us to give exclusive attention to the culture of one part of it, until the intoxicated intellect imagines itself all-wise and the spirit shrivels to death. It rather throws open to man the whole boundless field of truth and virtue as his proper heritage, and in generous and emphatic condemnation of all narrowness in thought or character cries out, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Thus we see that the man who takes the Bible for his guide must, so far as his opportunities permit, seek after all truth and intermeddle with all knowledge. But cosmic culture is not to be attained by searching after all truth simply for the sake of knowledge and development. That would make it only an enlarged mundane culture. The early processes of culture, conducted in a right spirit, reveal man's chief needs as having to do with character. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Religion is not a supplementary adornment, admirable but non-essential, like the thousands of elaborately chiselled flowers and statues on the marble roof of the Milan Cathedral; it is foundation, walls, columns, dome, and all. If it be anything it is everything. It either has no claim on us at all, or must claim all we are and can do.

This sweeping claim for religion may be abundantly vindicated by any one of several lines of argument. I shall refer now to but one directly suggested by the theme of this address, viz., the imperative need of religion in order to true culture. Volumes might be filled with the despairing wails of the devotees of culture apart from God. "Vanity of vanities," is their cry, "all is vanity." "In much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."

"They who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth:
The tree of knowledge is not that of life."

KEY TO BIBLE UNITY.

By President D. S. Gregory, D.D., Lake Forest University, Ill.

No. III.

THE OLD TESTAMENT PLAN.

(III) *The third phase* in the second stage of Old Testament redemption is the prophetic unfolding and embodiment of the divine religion in the spiritual life, aspirations, purposes and faiths of God's people in their connection with the coming Messiah. The records of the prophets strictly so-called began to be made about four hundred years before the closing up of the national and independent life of the Jews. A new force direct from God then needed to be brought to bear. The prophet was one who spoke for God, sometimes His present will and sometimes His declaration of future events. It was the task of the prophets, as divinely inspired, to watch over the covenant relation between God and His people, and so to superintend and conduct it as to work out the grand end of its institution, the preparation of the Jews and the world for the coming of Christ.

The usual division of the prophets is into major and minor, the major including some of the historical books already considered. But the progress in the history of God's people and the progress of the divine plan into which the prophets entered must, of course, furnish the present principle of division. This gives *three classes:* the prophets of the monarchy; the prophets of the captivity; the prophets of the restoration.

1. *The prophets of the monarchy.* The prophets of the period of the monarchy represent the struggle of divine grace to remove the corruption and idolatry of the people, and to prevent their apostasy and their destruction by their enemies.

The first great enemy of both Israel and Judah is *Assyria*—Syria and Egypt being of minor importance. Until the downfall of Israel, 721 B.C., the aim of the prophets is to save both Israel and Judah from Assyria. The promises centering in the Messiah furnish the great spiritual motive used.

(1) *The prophets of the Assyrian period*, for Israel and Judah, wrought side by side along the course of history from about 820 B.C. to 721 B.C., according to the common chronology. To be adequately understood, they must be taken out of their present setting in the Bible and studied side by side and in the order of history.

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a. The prophets for Israel — Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah—present the struggle to save Israel from Assyria, and its failure.

(*a*) *Jonah* (820) presents in object-lesson the doctrine of repentance. It contains the story of Jonah's mission (under Jeroboam II.) to Ninevah, the capital of *Assyria*, which begins to loom up as *the possible agent of judgment* on God's rebellious people.

(*b*) *Amos* (800) shows Israel's cup rapidly filling, and prefigures, by a great earthquake, the judgment—now impending for Judah and the Gentiles and already settling upon Israel—to come from *wild conquerors from the North, yet unnamed.*

(*c*) *Hosea* (797), after the death of Jeroboam II., warns Israel for sixty years and predicts the conquest and destruction by *the Assyrian.*

(*d*) *Micah* (757) predicts that Israel (Samaria) shall be destroyed by *Assyria* and Judah by Babylon; but that ultimate deliverance shall come to a remnant, and glory to Zion through Messiah.

b. The prophets for Judah—Joel, Isaiah, Nahum—present the struggle to save Judah from the Assyrian, and its success.

(*a*) *Joel* (810) uses the great plague of locusts as a warning against the coming judgments of Jehovah upon Judah, of which he gives a comprehensive outline.

(*b*) *Isaiah* (765) gives a masterly prophetic outline of the whole circle of God's purpose toward the world, and exhibits the glory of Messiah and His salvation, in order to save Judah and sustain the chosen ones during the destruction of Israel by Assyria, 721 B.C.

(*c*) *Nahum* (720) presents the burden of Nineveh (capital of Assyria) for the encouragement of Judah after the downfall of Israel.

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(2) *The prophets of the Babylonian Period*, for Judah, represent the struggle of divine grace to save the chosen people from their sins and from destruction by Babylon.

Isaiah prophesied the overthrow of Judah by Babylon, about 713 B.C., when Hezekiah, after his recovery from his sickness, was courting an alliance with that rising power. For almost three-quarters of a century onward no prophecies are recorded, much of the period, during the fifty-five years of the wicked Manasseh, having been blotted from sacred history. But Manasseh was carried away to Babylon (677), and thus led to repent and reform, so that the final judgment was delayed.

a. Zephaniah (640), at the opening of the reign of the good Josiah (641–610), gives *the initial impulse* to an attempt at the reformation of Judah. He portrays the terrible corruption, predicts the downfall of Jerusalem, and yet promises future restoration.

b. Habbakuk (630) adds *another and later impulse* toward the attempted reformation. He depicts their sins and the judgment from the Chaldeans (Babylonians), but encourages Judah by predicting God's vengeance upon Babylon and a new manifestation of the divine glory.

c. Jeremiah (629), the great prophet of the Babylonian period, began his prophetic work just before Josiah's tour of reform, aided in the unavailing effort to save Judah, and, after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, 606 B.C., encouraged repentance by predicting restoration and future glory through the Messiah. This work represents *the death struggle.*

The Chautauqua School of Theology

LAY-WORKERS.

The various Courses under survey in the Jerusalem Chamber Department of the School, have been specially adapted to the wants and needs of laymen who purpose to publicly labor for the evangelization of the common people. The different Lay-Colleges have accomplished much good within the same lines of aim and effort. But it is as true of the great majority of laymen as it is true of the great majority of the ministers thus laboring—that while they have need they have no time to attend the instructions given in these institutions.

THE CHAUTAUQUA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Offers them, however, precisely *what* they need *and at their own homes.* Lay-workers busily engaged in the labors of an evangelistic campaign have less need of and less time for instructions in theory, than have they who are privileged to quietly prepare for the fray. The former need appliances and instructions which can be immediately used.

In view of these necessities the Courses of study in the Jerusalem Chamber have been carefully adapted to secure the greatest immediate results to Lay-workers and Evangelists.

The Faculty of the School are heartily in sympathy with all true and earnest souls longing to advance the Redeemer's kingdom; they are as heartily in sympathy with those who can see no possible good which can come from sending forth

HARVESTERS WITHOUT A SICKLE,

or gleaners who have no hands.

If it were ever true that a demand existed for uneducated and uncultured ministers, it was at the same moment *more* true that a greater demand existed for an educated and cultured ministry; not because the numerical majority is on the side of culture and education, but because the majorities of the populace cannot be advanced in cultivation by one strictly on their own level. Nevertheless it is to be admitted that the popularly-called "average man," though unable to raise his class beyond his own altitude, may perform most beneficent functions. He may keep his *confreres* awake, aroused, expectant, receptive. He may prevent intellectual and moral stagnation. He may clear the vision. He may healthfully agitate the heart. He may lead some to Christ, the only One able to *lift* man to Christ the Quickener.

Indeed, the supreme office of any preacher is thus to lead one to the Quickener. The dominant conceit of the Clergy is intellectual vanity; its dominant error the assumption that man can be lifted by theology, dogmatism, fulmination, ritualism, and other processes of externality.

CHRIST IS THE ONLY QUICKENER,

The only Life-giver. And the blacksmith may lead a stone-mason or a College Professor (a much more difficult task for him) to the Quickener. A Bishop could not do more *in this office.* Possibly he

might do it more quietly or quickly, or with greater show of authority. His intellectual strength and social position *might* even help in impressing on the mason or on the Professor certain salutary and accessory convictions.

A converted pugilist might also have a special influence over the mason arising from former contests with him.

But neither the blacksmith, nor the Bishop, nor the converted bruiser can do more for these men ultimately than to lead them to the Quickener. To assume that the Bishop can in this respect do more than the blacksmith is to assume that the

BISHOP IS MORE THAN A MAN;

is doubtless to exemplify tradition and the hauteur of the clerical conceit; is to account (largely) for the fact of the world's spiritual illiteracy and unsavedness after eighteen centuries of Gospel light.

It not unfrequently happens that the education of some successful lay-workers reduces their efficiency as men once capable of leading other men to the Quickener; the better preacher is produced at the expense of the better soul-winner. He has learned more theology and theory, and so he preaches more theology and theory. Studies and plans engross time and energy and the strength of *man*. He loses power in the change of aim and purpose. He degenerates to

A PROFESSIONAL PREACHER.

False aims and false methods of teaching (generally associated) principally account for such results wherever these are found.

To educate Lay-workers in the things which are of actual and immediate utility, to foster the evangelistic and soul-saving spirit as being of absolute necessity to the healthful development of intellectual life, are principal aims of the CHAUTAUQUA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY.

If there are evangelistic methods better than others, insuring larger, quicker, or more permanent results to faithful efforts, *these* are pointed out. If there are special studies which an early lack of training indicates as necessary, these are designated. If certain books contain the very wisest counsels, or constantly inflame devotion, or reveal the mysteries of human nature and illustrate The Book, these are made the companions of the study and of the closet.

Lay-workers who follow the course marked out in the Department of Evangelism (No. 31 of the Jerusalem Chamber), are assured that neither time nor strength will be used in experimental efforts or in theoretic or unnecessary studies.

For the School statistics, detailed information, or for the Curriculums, address with stamp, the Dean, Rev. Alfred A. Wright, Boston, Mass.

THE PULPIT TREASURY IN THE FAMILY.

Home Life.

W. KELYNACK, D.D. (CONGREGATIONAL),
NEW SOUTH WALES.

Even as a matter of sentiment, home is a cherished word, and whatever may be the mid-life thoughts, the first and last are full of home. Rising from sentiment to morals and religion, the subject becomes most solemn. The family life is the fount of social life and determines whether it will be pestiferous or salutary. A home destitute of truth, virtue and godliness sends out its influences with productive power to curse and undermine public life; whilst the surest pledges of public well-being are furnished by the godly training in pious homes. God has bound up in the relationship of parent and child health-giving stimulus and inspiration. Children have been called the poetry of life and the flowers of the home —symbols into which the heart has coined the bullion of its affections. Given the father who, safe within the ark of God's love himself, labors to bring his children in, and you have a home in which the children will rise up and call their father blessed. And what of

A MOTHER'S LOVE!

Who has not felt its power? Sometimes we speak of angelic ministry; have we not a close approach to it in that of a mother who tenderly and lov-

ingly, and with an aroma of goodness, consecrates her life to the salvation of her children, and ceases only when amid their benedictions she sinks into her grave? Parents have the first chance, when the minds of their children are plastic and impressible, to stamp upon them noble qualities. The work at first is as easy as it is delightful, but later on in life becomes almost impossible. Molten metal may be run into any mould, but many a blow will be required to give it shape if allowed to cool. A child whose capabilities are allowed to grow by caprice instead of being trained under the sanctions of religion will bend a father's head with shame and break a mother's heart with grief. If it were asked, when does education commence? the answer is, as soon as a child can distinguish between a mother's smile and a mother's frown. Then begins the child's impressions from parental influence, impressions never wholly effaceable. When

THE HOME LESSON BOOK

includes bad tempers, unkind words, pride and caprice, vanity and worldly-mindedness, it is as vain to expect nobleness in the child as to look for grass and flowers on the storm-beaten granite rock. But let love serve at the altar, and truth keep the portals, and the confidence and love of the child will be retained. If we do not see such a result it must be because labor and prayer and godly devotion are wanting in the home. The home should be made the most hallowed spot to the children; and the bond between parent and child should be zealously guarded. Not even a Sunday-school teacher should be permitted to intrude there. No other interest should throw this into neglect. Neither the pressure of temporary business, nor even the calls of the Church, should be allowed to trench upon a parent's duty to his own household. "Beginning at Jerusulem" is still the rule; and such a beginning furnishes every other course of usefulness with a proper centre. What will family aggrandizement avail if gained at the expense of higher interests? Give a child a legacy of prayer and gentle words, and you can safely send him out into the world, and whether you can give him money or not he will be wealthy. What a call comes to us from the zeal of the teachers of an opposite kind? We cannot but regret deeply many social developments around us which are presenting

POISONOUS LESSONS

to eye and ear. Sometimes looking out upon these sources of evil, Christian parents tremble for their own children. They could not always be with them. It was God's order that they should go out and face the world. Christian parents should be before the world, and implant a disrelish for the evil; should so instruct and lead their children as to send them out with the armor of righteousness, and be able to say at their dismission, "Now, my child, if you fall I'll have sorrow, but not remorse." If Christian parents did that they would seldom have to mourn failure. The older I grow the stronger becomes my conviction that if we could each say, "I and my house will serve the Lord," our children would be our joy and solace. O for grace to live like that, and by and by to meet our children in the light of God!

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

There was a large attendance at the Monthly Meeting held February 28th. The subject of Heredity as it affects the moral and spiritual in man, was presented by Rev. A. H. Bradford, of Montclair, N. J. This is a subject to which Mr. Bradford has given careful study, and the difficulties of which he clearly recognizes. Christians, particularly the Christian ministry, must acknowledge the force of the attacks made by such men as Dr. Maudsley, and must meet them. Mr. Bradford's paper was entitled "Some Questions about Heredity;" his answers were clear, strong and satisfactory. The discussions which follow the reading of papers at the monthly meetings are a very interesting part of the proceedings. On

this occasion the subject was discussed by Hon. A. B. Conger, Harrington Putnam, Esq., Rev. Drs. Hadyn, Harris, and Deems, and others.

The library is gradually increasing by gifts of valuable books from publishers. Among others lately received are, "The Christian Evidence Lectures," being the publications of the Christian Evidence Society of London, England. "A Lady of Richfield Springs"—unknown by any other name—has sent several volumes bearing directly on the work of the Institute. It is hoped that so good an example will find imitators.

A "cordial" friend from St. Paul writes: "I am deeply interested in your work and the doings of your organization, and sincerely hope it will do much good in the way of promoting better thinking and of counteracting the shallow but pretentious unbelief now prevalent."

The Institute will hold two Summer Schools of Philosophy this year, one at Key-East, N. J., for a week; the other at Richfield Springs, N. Y., for two weeks. The lecturers, most of whom are already engaged, will ably sustain the high character and reputation which the Institute has attained.

Sunday School Cause

LIGHT ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

By Rev. Alfred H. Moment (Presbyterian), New York.

April 6, **Paul's Third Missionary Journey.**—Acts xviii., 23-28; xix., 1-7. 1884.

The great Apostle's life-work was divided into four parts: Three missionary journeys and a voyage to Rome with a sojourn there of two or three years. With this lesson we enter upon the last half of his great career—*the Third Journey.* Its history, though very brief, abounds with great facts and powerful life-lessons.

I. What Paul did on his journey. V. 21. In verse 21 we find Paul making a promise to visit Ephesus. The primary purpose therefore of this journey was to fulfil this promise. It was about the year 54. He, with Timotheus, Erastus and possibly others, set out from Antioch in Syria, going north into Asia Minor and passing through the provinces of Cilicia, Lycaonia, Galatia and Phrygia and thus on to Ephesus in the west. The entire "journey" was one of systematic work. In Cilicia, Paul's native country in Lycaonia, so memorable in his first journey, as well as in Galatia and Phrygia, these faithful men of God "*strengthened all the disciples*"—built them up in the true principles of the Gospel and in the *systematizing of Christian benevolence.* 1 Cor. xvi., 1-2, speaks of what the Apostle did when he was among the Church of Galatia. This inauguration of systematic giving to benevolent purposes, which has grown with the Church's growth, is sufficient to immortalize the Apostle's third missionary journey.

II. Apollos—His qualifications and work. V. 24-28. At this time the church at Ephesus was also receiving a blessing by the presence of one destined to hold an honored place among the founders of Christianity: Apollos, a learned Jew from the great schools of Alexandria. (1) Apollos had great natural endowments—he was "*an eloquent man*"—a word denoting lofty intellectual conceptions and profound effectiveness of speech; (2) he was "*mighty in the Scriptures*"—well versed in the Old Testament; (3) he knew God Himself in the fulness of the light of the old dispensation, even to the preaching of the Baptist; (4) he was "*fervent in the spirit*"—not lukewarm and indifferent as the manner of some who have the light is, but he was most zealous in the cause of righteousness; (5) he was a most laborious man—did not spare himself from toil—but "*taught diligently* the things of the Lord;" (6) he was a man of courage, "he spake *boldly* in the synagogue." But, as yet, Apollos is not fully furnished unto every good work. He lacked one thing, the Spirit of the Master Himself—the living Christ in the regenerated heart and the mind in clear perception of all the great doctrines of salvation. The Holy Ghost alone can work all this in the soul. The Holy Ghost Apollos did not possess, for "*he knew only the baptism of John.*" (v. 25.) He was great as an Old Testament

saint, but he that is least in the New Dispensation is greater than he.

V. 26. The honor of bringing this great man fully into the light of the Gospel, fell to Aquila and his wife Priscilla. In this verse we see an additional trait in Apollos, viz., *humility*. How beautiful it is to behold the great man with his splendid gifts and graces, sitting at the feet of these humble people and having "*expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.*" The soul bent on truth, is willing to receive it from the lips of Christ's humblest followers.

We see the prominent place lay workers held in the Apostolic Church; and not only this, but we see also that these workers were often *women*. Let no man question the right of females taking a prominent part in the Church so long as the honored name of Priscilla stands upon the inspired page.

V. 27, 28. Having now an experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ, Apollos leaves Ephesus and goes to Corinth, having with him "letters of commendation" from the brethren. The worthy should ever have the highest commendation we are able to give them. Honest praise will do the boys and girls of our classes no harm. A hearty commendation will often revive the spirits of teachers, superintendents and pastors, and possibly, too, make their work more effective—especially if they are passing into new fields of labor.

This eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures, had, as he entered Achaia, a new theme from what engaged his great soul in Ephesus. It was Christ. If he had zeal before, boldness, diligence, how much greater all these must have been now that the Holy Ghost filled his soul and Jesus stood before him in all the completeness of a divine Saviour.

V. 27, 28. Behold here a grand summary of his preaching: "He helped them much that had believed through grace;" "he mightily convicted the Jews"—he watered the seed sown by Paul (1 Cor. iii., 6) and made new converts among the ranks of unbelievers, and all this because he preached the Gospel—"*He showed by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.*" If we would convict the hardened and be helpful to the good, we must teach Jesus, showing by His birth, life and death, that He is the Christ, *i. e.*, the only Saviour of men, and all this, "from the Scriptures."

III. John's disciples at Ephesus. V. (xix.) 1–7. As Apollos passed out of Ephesus, the Apostle with his companions entered, coming in from the churches of the interior. Among the first things which engaged his attention was a conversation with twelve persons who had received the baptism of John and who were disciples according to his standard. That is, they believed that the time of the Messiah had fully come; that they should be prepared to receive Him; that they should mind their ways—"repent"—because He was at hand, and as an outward token of this being their belief, they had received the baptism of John. Like Apollos, they needed one thing more; like many in our day, they had stopped short of the great reality. Paul discerned this and hence his searching question:

V. 2. "*Have ye received the Holy Ghost?*" This is the most potent of all inquiries. It is a living one. It behooves every man and woman, old and young, to listen to this profound interrogation. Until the Holy Spirit has come into the soul, there can be no true charge of heart; no correct knowledge of Christ's great mission of His death, resurrection and the glorious hope his salvation imparts.

Of all these were the twelve persons spoken of in the lesson, ignorant, until Paul explained to them the difference between John's baptism and the full Gospel of Christ. They then believed, receiving the full blessing of the Spirit.

It is specified that "*they spake with tongues and prophesied*"—there being the visible and audible manifestations, in apostolic days, of the Spirit being received. We have no such evidence now—the daily life alone must bear its eloquent testimony to the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the heart.

APRIL 13, **Paul at Ephesus.**—ACTS xix., 8–22. 1884.

We now find Paul in the city where he spent so much of his precious time and among the people he so dearly loved.

I. Paul Preaching to the Ephesians and its results. V. 8–10. No sooner had Paul arrived than he began his work in the most public way by disputing with the Jews in the synagogue and endeavoring "to persuade them of the things concerning the kingdom of God." This was the Apostle's great work, and it is the work of every servant of Christ. When we cease to persuade men of the things of

God as they are revealed in the Lord Jesus, we cease to be His true disciples. As Paul did it with boldness, so should we. The fear of God in the heart, takes away all man-fear. Our boldness may do but little good toward changing men's hearts, but God is glorified nevertheless and our own souls are blessed. This was Paul's experience. Though he toiled long and earnestly, yet, "*divers were hardened and believed not.*" Hence he brought his labors to a close in the house of public worship, going into a more retired place, where he would be subject to less opposition. There is such a thing as casting pearls before swine.

From the synagogue with its scoffing crowd, our missionary goes to the schoolhouse of Tyrannus, taking with him all that believed. Here the good work was more effective, and a meeting was held daily for the space of two years. From these services went out an influence far and wide. "All they that dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

II. Christian Miracles and Ephesian Sorcery. V. 11–16. Paul, too, was especially magnified at this time by the great miracles he performed. So completely was he charged with divine power that miracles of healing were effected by the application of handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched his body. It was a trying time for the Church in Ephesus, hence God made His servant equal to the emergency, both in the proclamation of the truth and in deeds of wonderful power.

V. 13–19. These verses show the Gospel preached in a very different way. It would have been strange, indeed, if the false prophets had not taken advantage of Paul's preaching and miracles with the hope of securing their diabolical ends. In our day, the Scriptures are quoted and the Church's influence sought after for no other purpose. The wicked world would gladly triumph by divine power. But such efforts redound not to the success of Satan's cause but to the glory of God.

This is what we see in the verses before us. Here we behold a family of conjurers —"exorcists"—who, seeing the wonders wrought by the Apostle in the name of Jesus, took upon themselves the privilege of performing their enchantments by the same agency; "Saying, *we adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.*" But what a rebuke they receive: verses 15 and 16 add their eloquent testimony to all history, that Almighty God cannot be mocked; that His glory He will not give to another.

Not only do we see the fate of those wicked sorcerers, but we also learn from verses 17 and 18 how the Almighty turned this impious deed to good account, causing fear to fall upon all Ephesus, so that many believed in Jesus, making a public confession of their sins.

III. A Notable Bonfire. V. 19. Many others burned their books of evil art to the value of, perhaps, $10,000. What a loss, both in property and in souls, did Satan's kingdom sustain! Surely it might well be said: "*The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified!*" The 20th verse gives us the secret of this great victory. When God's Word prevails the kingdom of darkness suffers loss. Our only hope is in the plain teaching of the Scriptures of truth. The Word preached will yet prevail over every foe. To the name of Jesus every knee shall bow!

APRIL 20, **Paul's Preaching.**—1 COR. i., 17–31. 1884.

It was during his third missionary journey and while sojourning in Ephesus, that St. Paul wrote this Epistle. No one can read carefully the lesson of last Sabbath without beholding the different effects which the preaching of the Gospel has on different hearts; hardening some, making them more wicked; converting others, making them more tender and self-sacrificing.

I. The substance and manner of Paul's preaching. V. 17. The Apostle was struck with this thought himself, hence he presents it in the opening chapter of this Epistle. It is expressed in verses 18, 22, 23, and 24; while some would reject the Gospel as folly and weakness, others would receive it as their life and eternal joy. This thought controls all these verses. The lesson opens with a declaration of *how* the Gospel should be preached (v. 17): "*Not with wisdom of words*"—not with the tricks of the orator, the sophistry of the philosopher or any of the devices of the carnal mind, but by a pure heart, a good conscience and an unswerving faith in the Holy Spirit. When this is done, the cross is not made void, but is presented as the sinner's only remedy and God's highest exhibition of

love. As these are the great ideas to be impressed upon the hearer, the Gospel of Jesus Christ works out its own results according as he receives or respects it. "*To the one it is the savour of life unto life and to the other the savour of death unto death.*"

II. Christ crucified—The wisdom and power of God. V. 18–24. This is what is told us in the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing; *i. e.*, the atonement, being man's only hope and the grandest exponent of divine love, is a vain thing to the proud heart, but to all that will receive the doctrine, it is the power of God.

V. 19–21. These verses all refer to man's own ideas of redemption, to the exclusion of the divine method, all of which God shall destroy by exalting the "foolishness of preaching," *i.e.*, by making potent the cross the preaching of which the wise man regards as silly.

V. 22–24. The theme of the lesson given in v. 18, is here presented in fuller terms.

III. Weak things conquering the mighty. V. 25–31. V. 25 gives a reason for the truth under consideration: what men regard as exceedingly wise is less so than the most foolish thing of God, while their greatest strength is weaker than God's greatest weakness. This is only a striking way the writer has of saying that man's ideas of salvation are folly and weakness, while the Gospel is replete with the divinest wisdom and power. It alone can save—it alone is the sinner's hope and the highest expression of love!

In verses 26, 27, 28 he gives an expansion of the truth stated in v. 25. Pointing to the converts themselves, to those that had been saved by the Gospel and who were endeavoring to save others, he told them that not many of them were wise after man's standard of wisdom—not many powerful or noble; yet these and such as these would work God's purpose, causing His kingdom to triumph over that of Satan.

V. 29–31. Here is the conclusion of the whole matter: That God in Christ may have the glory, and not weak, sinful, flesh.

Man's chief end is to glorify God, but this he will never do until he beholds Christ Jesus on the cross as his "*wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption!*"

APRIL 27, **Abstinence for the Sake of Others.**—1 COR. viii., 1–13. 1884.

Here is a most practical lesson touching common life as men daily live it. We should study it with profound care.

I. Knowledge versus Love. V. 1–3. These verses seem to be a digression, but they are not so, as the "knowledge" here spoken of is the knowledge which both Paul and the Corinthians had of the true nature of an idol, viz., "that it was nothing" (v. 4). With this idea in their mind the Corinthians made a reckless use of the meat offered to idols, and afterwards sold in the public markets. The chapter opens by declaring that mere knowledge without love is very apt to do harm; to puff its possessor up with pride rather than strengthen the weak faith of his neighbor. We must allow God's love within us to regulate our conduct and not our proud understandings (v. 3). "Knowledge says: 'All things are lawful for me;' Love adds, 'But all things do not edify!'" This is what the religion of Jesus does for a man, viz., it makes love the basis of all his actions and such actions alone do a substantial good to mankind. (1 Cor. xiii.)

II. Rights versus Duties. V. 4–6. Here we have discussed, at length, the true import of a heathen God. And what a contrast Paul here presents us with, between the deities of the whole heathen world and the true God. The former are nothing, but the latter is a Father of whom are all things, and we having our existence in Him, and revealed to the world by the God-man, Christ Jesus, who has made all things and redeemed us to Himself from sin. Surely such a God shall yet triumph over "the gods many and the lords many," which are nothing.

V. 7–13. Paul discusses his theme from this to the close of the chapter. Though an idol is nothing, and the meat offered perfectly harmless as to all moral significance, yet all have not this knowledge: "*Some* with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol, and their conscience being weak is defiled." Here the truth is stated, but lest there should be any misapprehension as to what defiles the conscience, the Apostle explains that it is not the *meat* itself, but the *act of eating it.* "*Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.*" It is possible for us to do that which of itself is not wrong, which would do ourselves no harm, and yet, which is a

great sin because of its influence upon others. From such things we should abstain for the sake of others. This involves the doctrine of expediency which is binding upon all men. "All things are lawful for me," says the Apostle, "but all things are not expedient." Why? Because some "lawful things" may induce a weak brother to do that which is sin to him because of his weakness, and hence I may be the cause of that person being lost.

What an awful thought as we behold it in the light of v. 12. By sinning against such a person, I sin against my Saviour, Christ disguised in my weak brother! What manner of men should we be! Surely, like Paul, we should say: "If meat maketh my brother to offend—if the wine-cup, the theatre, the dance, the gaming-table, or any such thing—make any man to falter in his faith, we will abstain from all such while the world standeth."

Preachers' Interviews

Methods with Inquirers.

S. F. H.—To win men to Christ and to a Christian profession is an important work. Some ministers seek the co-operation of evangelists. In seasons of special refreshing when the Church is devoted and active and there is an unusual spiritual sensitiveness, those upon whom the truth has made saving impressions will be likely to manifest it; each according to temperament, and should be treated accordingly.

But in the course of the ordinary services of the sanctuary, Sabbath school, etc., there will always be some more or less affected about their spiritual interests. How ought these to be approached and dealt with? Some Southern pastors at the close of every sermon in which they present the offer of salvation, ask people to come forward and take the preacher's hand as a pledge that they will seek and serve the Lord. The settled pastor should not only faithfully preach the truth but should conduct himself in a way that will commend him as an affectionate and faithful friend — one whom non-professors will willingly talk with or write to. Christian friends ought also to inform the pastor of those whom they know as giving increased attention and who are tenderly alive to their souls' welfare.

He who watches for souls should be always ready to detect special interest and act as occasion requires. His methods should be adapted to the temperament and the time. He should use great plainness of speech, be even stern in some cases, but always influenced by the Loving Spirit and never breaking the bruised reed.

In times of special interest I would invite to rise for prayer and to the study and inquiry-room for conversation. If this invitation is accepted something is gained; there has been a committal which has its influence. Great carefulness should be exercised in getting a decision. There must be no superficial or mechanical dealing. To get the best method, we must have an accurate understanding of the divine requirements, a close observation of human nature even in the particular case, offer special prayer for each and be whole-souled in our devotedness to our work. God will, in answer to prayer, give the needed wisdom and grace.

W. W.—I once thought a public demonstration should not be made. I think now I was wrong. Why should we preach a pointed sermon, dismiss the congregation, and not look for inquirers? But rising for *prayers* is not the right thing. It is liable to turn the attention to the prayers of Christians rather than to Christ. Better to invite them to Christ at once. The only instance of rising for prayers in the New Testament is Simon Magus. I would use a different method in the Sunday-school. There is danger of the children going in flocks. Better find out the inquirers, form them into a class and instruct them privately in the way of salvation.

S. M. G.—Circumstances so differ that we can have no inflexible rule. The

only rule is common sense and a warm heart. Let us rely on the Spirit's guidance.

H. W.—I do not believe so much as I did in revivals *so-called*, or in spasmodic efforts, or in the multiplication of meetings. The Gospel is no more propitious in the winter than in the summer. We accomplish more by steady work than by any other mode. We ought to be constantly on the lookout for inquirers. I believe in the steady means of grace and in expecting that results will follow. I announce each Sunday that I will be in my study on such an evening to converse with all who want to see me; and I say to Christians, "Here is a chance to labor for Christ and to bring in your friends." Then I call on inquirers during the week. Be always *expecting results.*

M. S.—The great thing is to be on fire myself. My preaching has often failed because I never had a successful system of getting hold of inquirers.

T. B.—Let a church use its own material instead of sending off for an evangelist. When the pastor and Church throw themselves on God the result will be glorious.

P. G.—I am less and less inclined to adopt any one method. I have learned to work in any harness. Each system has its defects. Personal contact with inquirers is good. So is rising for prayers—it is a committal.

Men should confess in some way their need of Christ. Revivals are good if they are sent by God. But they are not the normal condition of the Church. The strain of what is called revivals could not be endured all the time by pastor or church. We should always be expecting fruit, but, at the same time, be prepared for the great ingatherings.

H. P.—We are having as many inquirers as in former years, but fewer rising for prayer. Many come to the inquiry-meeting and confess Christ there whom I had not known before as inquirers.

I am at the church according to my announcement, ready to meet every one who desires to see me. There is always some one there at that hour who has come for conversation on personal religion. This inquiry-meeting is far more important than the rising for prayers. I try to make these meetings as informal as possible. A Church ought to be constantly gathering souls for Christ. I never had and I do not know that I ever shall have what is called a revival in my church. The Lord has given me two or three souls at a time.

S. F.—I have often written a short personal note to an inquirer.

Prayer Meeting Service

The Conditions of Successful Prayer.

By W. M. Taylor, D.D, LL.D. (Congregational), N. Y.

The desire that simply flits across the soul as the shadow of the cloud glides over the summer grass, is no true prayer. It must take hold of the spirit, and gather into itself all the energy and earnestness of the suppliant. The popular idea, indeed, is that prayer is a very simple matter; but in reality it is the highest exercise of the soul, and requires for its presentation the concentration of all its powers. The English prelate was right when he said that "No man was likely to do much good in prayer who did not begin by looking upon it in the light of a work to be prepared for, and persevered in, with all the earnestness which we bring to bear upon subjects which are, in our opinion, at once most interesting and most necessary."

So much as this must be evident from the phraseology of the Scriptures themselves. Observe the gradation in the terms "asking," "seeking," "knocking."

The "asking" is the lower form of requesting; but the "seeking" implies the activity of one who puts himself to the labor of a search; and the "knocking" refers to

the continued importunity that repeats its application, until it is satisfied that there is no one in, or until the door is actually opened. Here, too, we come to those parables spoken by the Lord, to the end that men ought always to pray and not to faint. The true suppliant is importunate. Like Jacob, he wrestles with the angel, if need be, until the dawning of the day; or like the Syro-Phœnician woman, he renews his entreaties in the face of seeming rebuff; from an apparent refusal, draws a plea which in the end prevails. No mere sluggard's formalism, therefore, will suffice. That is not prayer. That is but the husk of appearance. The true suppliant will "continue instant in prayer," and, when he is over, the exhaustion of his spirit will convince him that he has been laboring indeed. "Believe me," said Coleridge to his nephew two years before his death, 'to pray with all your heart and strength, with the reason and the will, to believe vividly that God will listen to your voice through Christ, and verily do the thing that pleaseth Him at last, this is the last, the greatest achievement of the Christian's warfare on earth. Teach us to pray, Lord."

Best Method of Conducting the Prayer-Meeting.

By a Layman (Presbyterian).

I regard the prayer-meeting as the spiritual life and vigor of the church—that is, a church with a "live, vigorous" mid-week meeting, well attended and advantageously conducted, assures a live, vigorous, spiritual church, where the preaching of the Word will become the power of God unto salvation; but without this means will be torpid if not dead. This is universally conceded by the most spiritually minded members in our churches.

Now for something more practical. One of the essentials to the success of the prayer-meeting is the question: "How may it be most advantageously conducted, so as to infuse such spiritual life into the church, as that the preaching of the Word may have free course and be glorified?" Christ established His Church in the world, that the world may be converted to Him, and one of the greatest instrumentalities He employs to this end is the preaching of His Gospel. If, however, His professed followers are lukewarm and indifferent they cannot reasonably expect the preaching to accomplish that whereunto it was sent. The disciples of Christ must be Aarons and Hurs, holding up the hands of His ministers by earnest, importunate prayer, that the Word may become the power of God unto salvation.

In presenting my individual views upon the question, I will first treat it negatively: I do not think it profitable for the same parties to occupy all or nearly all the time of each successive meeting, to the exclusion of others who might be induced to take part, were not this the case. Is not this too generally true?

Long talks by the leader or any other person, of twenty or more minutes, are unproductive of good. No talk should exceed five minutes, and in many cases three minutes would be better, and this very practical.

I do not relish the idea of limiting individuals in prayer; but there is a reasonable limit beyond which none should go, that many others may have an opportunity for a like service.

I do not think it profitable that any one person, minister or member, should conduct the service of each succeeding meeting; as by so doing it will become somewhat monotonous and consequently uninteresting—not but that some members are more edifying in their talks and prayers then others, but because the humblest member may bring out some thoughts that are as apples of gold in pictures of silver. I often think that if I were a minister I would refuse to conduct prayer-meeting exercises all the time for at least two reasons: first, because of the labor incident upon the preparation and service; and, second, because a continual talking by most persons to the same auditors will lose its power, however able and instructive it may be. Variety is said to be the spice of life.

The prayer-meeting service should not exceed one hour, and the time should be largely occupied by short, importunate,

beseeching prayer. I might add many further reasons, but will desist.

I think the prayer-meeting belongs more particularly to the church than to the minister. The pulpit is the exclusive property of the preacher, with which there should be no interference by the people so long as he continues to preach Christ crucified; but the prayer-meeting belongs to the church as a means to the strengthening of the minister for his work.

Again, this mid-week meeting, when properly—hence profitably—conducted, operates as an educator to the members of the church. Where the minister conducts all these meetings, he is depriving the membership of that training necessary to the welfare of the church in his absence; whereas, if these were properly trained they could be much more useful to the Church and the world.

If I have made this article too long it is because of my interest in the subject. I feel that our prayer-meetings are not accomplishing the good they should—hence my sole object in sketching these lines; and should they be productive of good, I will have accomplished my purpose.

Christian Edification.

The Minimum Christian.

Rev. N. C. M.

The minimum Christian! Who is he? He is the Christian who is trying to go to heaven at as cheap a rate as possible. He is the man who aims to have as little religion as he can without lacking it altogether. He wants to get all the world he can, and yet escape the worldling's doom.

The minimum Christian goes to church in the morning, and in the evening also, unless it rains, or is too warm, or too cold, or he is sleepy, or has the headache from eating too much dinner. He listens most respectfully to the preacher, and joins in prayer and praise. He applies the truth very sensibly—to his neighbors. He goes rarely to the prayer-meeting, as it is very apt to be uninteresting. He is always, however, at the communion and is frequently quite regular in his family prayers for a week or two after.

The minimum Christian is very friendly to all good works. He wishes them well, but it is not in his power to do much for them. The Sunday-school he looks upon as an admirable institution, especially for the neglected and ignorant. It is not convenient, however, for him to take a class. His business engagements are so pressing during the week that he needs Sunday as a day of rest—nor does he think himself qualified to act as teacher. He is in favor of tract distribution, and of visiting the poor; but he has no time to take part in these labors of love. He thinks it a good thing for laymen to assist at prayer-meetings, and in social religious circles; but he has no gift for public prayer, or for making addresses, and he must leave it to others. He is very friendly to home and foreign missions, and gives his "mite." He thinks there are "too many appeals," but he gives, if not enough to save his reputation, pretty near it—at all events he aims at it.

The minimum Christian is not clear on a number of points. The opera and dancing, perhaps the theatre and card-playing, and large fashionable parties, give him much trouble. He can't see the harm in this, or that, or the other popular amusement. There is nothing in the Bible against it. He does not see but that a man may be a Christian, and dance, or go to the opera. He knows several excellent people who do. Why should not he?

The minimum Christian does not believe much in sudden conversions, nor in zealous aggressive efforts; he has no fancy for revivals; his greatest concern is a dignified propriety and a faultless decorum, and that all things "should be done decently and in order," whether souls are saved or no. He has a fondness for the æsthetic, and prides himself on a refined literary

taste, and he has no patience with the pastor's rousing appeals to faith and repentance. They are not elegant. The cause may be hurt thereby, and Mr. Dives may give up his pew. These are they "that hinder the Gospel." The Church of God is not in half as much danger to-day from scepticism as she is from her minimum Christians. Be one thing or the other. Be hot or cold. Be a Christian or a worldling. But be no longer a tepid, vapid, indifferent, minimum Christian.

Signs of Spiritual Decline.

By Rev. A. G. S.

1. When you are averse to religious conversation or the company of heavenly-minded Christians.

2. When, without necessity, you absent yourself from religious services.

3. When you are more concerned about pacifying conscience than of honoring Christ in performing duty.

4. When you are more afraid of being counted over-strict than of dishonoring Christ.

5. When you trifle with temptation, or think lightly of sin.

6. When the faults of others are more a matter of censorious conversation than secret grief and prayer.

7. When you are impatient and unforgiving to others.

8. When you confess but do not forsake sin, and when you acknowledge but still neglect duty.

9. When your cheerfulness has more of the levity of the unregenerate than the holy joy of the children of God.

10. When you shrink from self-examination.

11. When the sorrows and care of the world follow you further into the Sabbath than the Saviour of the Sabbath follows you into the week.

12. When you are easily prevailed upon to let your duty as a Christian yield to your worldly interest or the opinions of your neighbors.

13. When you associate with men of the world without solicitude of doing good or fear of having your own spiritual life injured.

Helpful Hints for Workers

The Measure of Duty.

By John R. Paxton, D.D.

"She hath done what she could." It was Mary, the sister of Lazarus, who poured the oil on Jesus' head. But it was Judas who protested. He figured its value. He was to be pitied; he had a devil to direct him. Many of us have little imps. But Judas was a monarchical soul, governed by one devil. I don't throw stones at him from the pulpit. For I see in Judas the possibilities of my own soul. It must have been mortifying to the refined Mary to hear this gross protest. What could she do? Not many ways were open to her. She couldn't follow the Lord as the disciples did, for she was a woman. She did not have the chance to watch with Him or even to die with Him. But she did what she could; she performed one loving deed. The secret of content lies in the fact of doing what we are fitted to do. Discontent comes from doing what we can't do, and in bungling at what God Almighty never meant for us to do. Such women as Mary are rare. The things we can do we don't care to do. John Bunyan, who wrote the best prose in the English language, wasted most of his life writing the poorest poetry in the world. There are fewer sadder sights than to see men doing uncongenial work, and there is no necessity for it. Every one can do something well. Let us imitate Mary, who did not as Martha did, nor as the disciples wished her to do, but what she could. People like her are like the shadow of a rock in a desert. Contact with them is like a benediction. This isn't a bad world. It

is full of opportunity to people who are not grossly selfish. Mary shows us how to go through the world contentedly, not grumbling at our condition or longing for things we have not, which only brings misery and madness. Who are doing what they can? Those who give according to their means and work where they can. Doing what you can means doing in your office, in your store, in your home, as father, mother, making the world better, making Christ nearer and dearer, and commending Him to men by your example.

Qualifications for Workers.

By D. L. Moody (Congregationalist).

Christian workers want faith. You won't succeed if you have not faith and expectation. Let us get to work with faith; believing will succeed. Matthew, Mark, and Luke record that four men brought a paralytic to Jesus, "when He saw their faith." Perhaps the poor man himself had no faith. But the four had. I can fancy those four were men who themselves had been healed. I can imagine one had been a leper, and healed; another deaf and dumb, and healed. A third had had a paralyzed arm. Jesus had restored it; and a fourth perhaps had been lame from his birth. But they well knew in themselves Christ's power, and so they believed He could heal this poor man. They let him down right at the feet of Jesus. You cannot lay your friends in a better place.

If *you* can't get a soul to Christ, get one friend to help you. If one won't do, get two. If two won't do it, get three. And I venture to say that if you get four men after any one unsaved man, you will not be long getting that man wakened up. Not a man but you'll get if only you set men after them. And if four men won't get a man to hear the Gospel, get forty men after him, and you'll turn a city bottom side up.

Then a second thing *workers* need is *courage*. Courage always follows faith. We want courage. Give us a thousand godly men with courage to speak for God, and you'll have a thousand converted. They preached (in Acts) with *boldness*. God wants bold men. Joshua saw a man with a drawn sword: did he run away? *We* should—some of us! But no—he went right up: "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" As captain of the Lord's host am I come, and I'm going to lead you to victory.

When God was going to give Gideon victory He ordered all the weak and timid to wheel out. We should not think we had many left if two-thirds of this audience got up and went out, should we? And two-thirds left him—went back to their wives and mothers.

We want *enthusiasm*—do you know that means "in God?" Men are terrified at enthusiasm. "Undue excitement!" say they; "fleshly!" "carnal!" "spasmodic!" Eight years ago I was invited to attend the Epsom races. I was there to preach, and I can tell you I saw more enthusiasm in that one day than in all the religious meetings I have ever been at. The next morning I saw the report in the London papers, but not a word about the excitement. People may be off their heads about anything else, but if one breath of the Spirit of God wakens up souls, "Oh! it is all excitement," is the cry. Well, we want it; we want men with fire and enthusiasm for God's work, and the men that go in for God's work and for winning souls, they'll have them. I once heard of an officer in India who came home and said he didn't much believe in missionaries, for through all his Indian campaign he'd never seen a single convert. A little while after, his friend said to him, "Did you ever see a tiger in India?" "A tiger—yes! and have shot plenty of them too." "Well! I lived in India many years, but I never saw a tiger," replied the missionary. There it was: one man had been looking for tigers, and had found tigers; the other had been looking for converts and had found them. What we seek we shall find. So don't be afraid of enthusiasm. I'd rather have zeal without knowledge, than knowledge without zeal.

One man shall chase a hundred, and ten shall put a thousand to flight; but I can tell you it seems sometimes as if it took a thousand to chase one!

Beautiful Thoughts

Without adversity, grace withers.—*Mason.*

"A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man."—*Young.*

Ah! if you knew what peace there is in an accepted sorrow.—*Madame Guyon.*

The end of learning is to know God, and out of knowledge to love Him and imitate Him.—*Milton.*

Carry the cross patiently, and with perfect submission; and in the end it shall carry you. —*Kempis.*

The whole linen that robes the saint, the raiment meet for thy soul and approved of God, was woven upon the cross.—*Dr. Guthrie.*

Good prayers never came weeping home. I am sure I shall receive either what I ask or what I should ask.—*Bishop Hall.*

Christ's blood on the head is the greatest curse; Christ's blood on the heart is the richest blessing.—*Rutherford.*

To fill your life with the spirit of heaven here, is the way to make sure of going to heaven hereafter.—*Thomas.*

Make others to see Christ in you, moving, doing, speaking, and thinking; your actions will speak of Him, if He be in you.—*Rutherford.*

The serene, silent beauty of a holy life is the most powerful influence in the world, next to the might of the Spirit of God.—*Spurgeon.*

Prayer is so mighty an instrument that no one ever thoroughly mastered all its keys. They sweep along the infinite scale of man's wants and of God's goodness.—*Hugh Miller.*

Get but the truth once uttered, and 'tis like a star new born, that drops into its place, and which, once circling in its placid round, not all the tumult of the earth can shake.—*James Russell Lowell.*

I believe that the want of our age is not more "free" handling of the Bible, but more "reverent" handling, more humility, more patient study, and more prayer.—*Rev. J. C. Ryle.*

Life is made up not of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things, in which smiles and kindness and small obligations given habitually, are what win and preserve the heart, and both secure and give comfort.—*Sir H. Davy.*

Prayer is the preface to the book of Christian living; the text of the life sermon; the girding on of the armor for battle; the pilgrim's preparation for his journey. It must be supplemented by action, or it amounts to nothing.—*Phelps.*

Since the world began, no true work for God was ever wasted; no true word spoken for Him has ever failed of doing good; no true life has ever been in vain. The seed sown may not rise in a moment, but there is immortal vitality in it, and the harvest shall be sure.—*Edwards.*

To do God's will—that's all
That need concern us; not to carp or ask
The meaning of it; but to ply our task,
Whatever may befall;
Accepting good or ill as He shall send,
And wait until the end.
—*Margaret J. Preston.*

When President Edwards came to die, after bidding all his relatives farewell, his last words were, "And now where is Jesus of Nazareth, my true and never-failing friend?" and so saying he sweetly fell asleep. Jesus is a friend, ever near and ever true; the best friend for earth or heaven. —*Foster.*

There is no place where earth's sorrows
Are so felt as up in heaven;
There is no place where earth's failings
Have such kindly judgment given.
Oh, if our love were but more simple,
We should take Him at His word;
And our lives should be all sunshine
In the sweetness of our Lord.
—*Faber.*

A Hallowed Sabbath.—The benign influence of a hallowed Sabbath will diffuse itself along the week, will sweeten the atmosphere of your home, and tell its tale of blessing in domestic harmony and growing in-door comfort. It will send you with elastic step and a clear, calm head, with peaceful conscience and unruffled temper, to your Monday morning's employ. It will keep a sharp thorn out of your dying pillow; and if it lead you to the tomb of a risen Saviour, will more than reconcile you to your own.—*James Hamilton, D.D.*

I look upon the doctrines of grace as my Lord's garments, and they smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia. I look upon His precepts as His sceptre, and it is a rod tipped with silver; and I delight to touch it and find comfort in its power. I look upon the gospel ordinances as the throne upon which He sits, and I delight in a throne of ivory overlaid with pure gold; but oh, His person is sweeter than His garment, dearer than His sceptre, more glorious than His throne; He himself is altogether lovely, and to love Him is the very heart's core of true religion.—*Spurgeon.*

61. Self-Abnegation.—Ps. cxv., 1.

It is narrated of the great sculptor Michael Angelo, that when at work he wore over his forehead, fastened on his artist's cap, a lighted candle, in order that no shadow of himself might fall upon his work! It was a beautiful custom and spoke a more eloquent lesson than he knew! for the shadows that fall on our work—how often they fall from ourselves!

62. Human Forgiveness.—Rom. xii., 19.

A traveller in Burmah, fording a river, found his body covered all over with leeches, busy sucking his blood. He began to tear the tormentors from his flesh, but his servant told him that his wounds would be poisoned unless the leeches dropped off spontaneously. The servant prepared a bath with healing herbs and directed his master to lie down in it. As soon as he bathed in the balsam, the leeches dropped off. You must bathe your whole being in God's pardoning mercy, and enemies—these venomous creatures—will let go their hold.

63. The Precision with which God Fulfils Promises.—Exod. xii., 41, 42.

I was once crossing the Atlantic and had come within three days' sail of the Irish coast. Fog and darkness shut out the sun by day and the stars at night. We had to trust to dead reckoning, that is, to the log, the compass, the chart and other nice nautical computations. Standing by the captain, I heard him say on the last of these days, "We ought to see Fasnett Light in *twelve minutes!*" I took out my watch and waited. We saw the welcome light in just *eleven!* There, thought I, is a triumph of nautical skill and calculation, to push on so steadily and surely through the darkness day after day to the point aimed at. We justly confide in one who has proved himself trustworthy in human affairs, but the witness of God is greater. Why ever distrust Him? He has not only fixed the movements of the stars and the tides, but His promises of grace are unchangeable. "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." If the wisdom of man elicits our admiring praise and commands our confidence, how much more should the grace of God, the infinitely Wise, secure at once our homage and our love.—*R. S. Storrs, D.D.*

64. The Harvesting Ant.—Prov. vi., 8.

The truth of Solomon's reference to the ant, which has been questioned before now, is fully vindicated. Dr. Macmillan has found the food stored up in the nests of the ants, and he adds this interesting information: "Examining the seeds collected in the nests of the ants on the top of the hill at Nice more particularly with my magnifying glass I found to my astonishment that each seed had its end carefully bitten off. And the reason of this was perfectly plain. You know each seed contains two parts: the young plant or germ lying in its cradle, as it were, and the supply of food for its nourishment, when it begins to grow, wrapped round it. Now the ants had bitten off the young plant germ, and they left only the part which was full of nourishment. And they did this to prevent the seeds from growing and exhausting all the nourishment contained in them. If they did not do this, the seed stored under the ground when the rains came would shoot, and so they would lose all their trouble and be left to starve. I could not find in the heap a single seed that had not been treated in this way. Of course, none of the seeds that had their ends bitten off would grow; and you might as well sow grains of sand as the seed found in ants' nests."

65. The Law and Gospel.—John i., 17.

Contrast Sinai and Zion. These are the symbols of two great dispensations of God. Sinai, that of the law; that old mountain, standing with its bared brow lifted to storm and tempest and sunshine, scarred by the lances of the lightning, and shattered by earthquake and thunder—that old granite peak stands cold, flinty, stern, unrelenting, with its stony face looking out on the future as toward the past. As Jehovah descended from the throne of His glory to deliver the Law into the hands of His servant Moses, Sinai shrank from His presence as a guilty thing, veiled in smoke and cloud, tremulous with thunder, and crowned with flaming lightnings—Sinai became the symbol of terror and dread. Law knows no pardon. Law is inflexible, unrelenting, uncompromising. Upon the forefront of that mountain, as the index of the Law, burned the words, "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

Have you ever stood before Milan Cathedral as the sun was tipping its many marble minarets and spires, which lift their more than three thousand statues into the air? Have you looked upon the wonderful structure in which buttress and spire, roof and wall blend into a beautiful harmony? But grander far was the temple on Mount Zion; it had embodied in itself something more than music. It embodied in itself the genius of worship, of which music is the mere handmaid. Mount Zion for her glory and associations with all that was dear and sacred to Israel became one of the most expressive symbols of Psalmist and prophet.—*Ellis.*

Monthly Survey

Since Mr. Moody's meetings in the Clapham district, London, the different ministers have agreed to hold a united evening service monthly.

The American International Committee of Christian Associations expended during the year 1883, $30,715.17, and it closed the year free from debt.

Pope Leo approves of the movement for the suppression of legalized gambling at Monte Carlo. Since New Year's day there have been 16 suicides and 2 murders at that gambling place.

The liberals of Italy, of whatever shade of church or social policy, find in the name of Luther a thunderbolt that makes the apartments of the Vatican resound with terror.

In 170 colleges of this country there are 35,000 students. Of this number 14,000 are church members, 1,400 having joined during the past collegiate year.

The tide is beginning to turn in the Soudan. The fanatical Arabs of Osman Digma have been decidedly vanquished with great loss by the British troops under Gen. Graham, and Tokar has been recovered.

The first Malagassy who learned the alphabet died January, 1883, at the age of seventy-two. He had lived to see 50,000 of his countrymen taught to read, and over 70,000 profess their faith in Christ.

The Bible is now sold in Florence at a stand which is midway between the stake at which Savanarola was burned and the river Arno, into which his ashes were cast.

Gen. Gordon, on leaving London for his responsible post, wrote Canon Wilberforce, "I would rather have the prayers of that little company gathered in your house to-day than I would have the wealth of the Soudan placed at my disposal. Pray for me that I may have humility and the guidance of God, and that all spirit of murmuring may be rebuked in me."

Large as are the buildings in which Messrs. Moody and Sankey are conducting their London services this winter, they are repeatedly found inadequate to contain all who come to hear. Something like thirty thousand people gathered on Sunday, January 13th, to listen to the evangelists, who were then holding services in Battersea, a London district south of the Thames. Three large overflow meetings—one of them in the open air—were organized of those who could not find admission to Leadenhill Hall, where Messrs. Moody and Sankey were speaking. Major Whittle and Mr. and Mrs. McGranahan conduct a men's meeting nightly at Wesleyan Chapel, and the work of all the evangelists in ably seconded.

The statistics of the religious denominations of this country are as follows:

	Churches.	*Ministers.*	*Communicants.*
Adventists	1,344	775	91,769
Baptists	37,156	26,545	3,336,553
Congregationalists	3,936	3,723	387,619
Friends	392	200	96,000
German Ev. Church	550	430	80,000
Lutherans	6,130	3,429	785,987
Methodists	41,271	24,485	3,943,875
Mennonites	500	450	80,000
Moravians	84	70	9,928
New Jerusalem	87	92	3,994
Presbyterians	11,783	8,834	966,437
Protestant Episcopal	3,109	3,664	351,699
Reformed	1,942	1,320	243,825
Roman Catholic	6,241	6,546	6,832,954
Schwendfeldians	....	....	700
Unitarians	362	434	20,000
Universalists	719	713	36,238
Total in United States	115,610	81,717	17,267,878

A German statistician of considerable note, G. F. Kolb, has recently published some carefully collected statistics of the religious status of the world. According to these there are 425,000,000 Christians on the globe, who are divided into 215,000,000 Roman Catholics, 122,000,000 Protestants, 80,000,000 adherents of the Greek Church and 8,000,000 of other churches. In the German Empire there were, on Dec. 1st, 1880 (the last time that general statistics were taken), 28,318,592 Evangelical Christians, 16,229,290 Roman Catholics, 93,834 other Christians, 561,612 Jews, and 30,675 adherents of other religions. The other Protestant countries of Europe are England, the Low Countries, Sweden and Norway, Denmark and Switzerland. In Austria-Hungary there are 28,500,000 Catholics, and a little over 3,500,000 Protestants; in France, 37,000,000 Catholics, and 600,000 Protestants; in Russia, 8,000,000 Catholics, 4,000,000 Protestants, 63,000,000 Greek Christians, 2,500,000 Jews and 2,000,000 Mohemmedans; in Italy there are 28,500,000 Catholics and only 60,000 Protestants; in Sweden, over 4,500,000 Protestants, but only 600 Catholics; in Denmark, 1,953,000 Protestants and 3,000 Catholics; in Switzerland, 1,670,000 Protestants and 1,160,000 Catholics; in Belgium, 5,500,000 Catholics and 15,000 Protestants; in the Netherlands, 2,500,000 Protestants and 1,450,000 Catholics. For England the following figures are given: 18,537,000 members of the State Church, 1,473,000 of the Scotch Church, 6,039,000 Dissenters, 5,520,000 Catholics, and 76,000 Israelites.

Book Department, Etc.

JOHN PLOUGHMAN'S TALK AND PICTURES, or Plain Advice for Plain People. By C. H. Spurgeon. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 530 Broadway.

The noted preacher in this volume deals sturdy blows at many vices prevalent especially among the masses of society, holds the mirror up to nature in his pictures, and in his own homely phrase commends whatever is virtuous, lovely and of good report. The book is well calculated to interest both young and old.

THE PULPIT COMMENTARY. Edited by Rev. Canon H. D. M. Spence, M.A., and Rev. J. S. Exell, M.A. 1 *Corinthians*. Exposition by Ven. Archdeacon Farrar, D. D.; Homiletics by David Thomas, D.D., and Homilies by various authors—Donald Frazer, D.D.; Ex-Chancellor Lepscomb, LL.D.; E. Hurndall, M.A.; Prof. J. R. Thomson, M.A.; Rev. R. Tuck, B.A.; Rev. J. Waite, B.A.; H. Bremner, D.D. New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Co.

The plan of this commentary, designed to cover the whole Bible, is well carried out in this volume on 1st Corinthians. Both the Exposition and the Homiletics maintain the high standard of the preceding volumes, and while there is evidence here and there of the diversity of minds employed in its preparation, the outcome on the whole is very satisfactory. It is but justice to the American publisher to state that, by an arrangement with the English publishers, Messrs. A. D. F. Randolph & Co. are issuing the work in this country from duplicate stereotype plates and at about one-half the price of the English edition.

GOD AND THE FUTURE LIFE: The Reasonableness of Christianity. By Charles Nordhoof. New York: Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square.

The writer, who is a well known litterateur, has done good service in preparing this volume upon the great subjects of which it treats. These subjects are often neglected by those who are absorbed in the ambitions and pleasures of the present life. If this book should obtain a reading with attention, it will revive and strengthen Christian faith, meet many inquiries frankly and be a source of comfort to many hearts.

VIGNETTES FROM INVISIBLE LIFE. By John Badcock, F. R. M. S. London, Paris and New York: Cassell & Company, Limited.

The world revealed by the microscope is set before the reader in this little volume. The revelations are deeply interesting and instructive; they are placed before the eye, written upon the memory and a new source of delight is opened to every one who will come and partake. The truths acquired are gems displaying the wisdom and skill of the Creator.

THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD. By Rev. William Arnot. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers.

These lectures on the parables are full of the good common sense and evangelical spirit which were so characteristic of their author. There are also touches of pathos, eloquent passages, and apt illustrations scattered through the pages which give them a zest and attraction to all readers.

LIGHT IN LANDS OF DARKNESS: A Record of Missionary Labor among Greenlanders, Eskimos, Patagonians, etc.; Syrians, Armenians, Nestorians, Persians, Egyptians and Jews. By Robert Young, with an introduction by The Right Hon. The Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G. Illustrated. New York: Cassell & Company, Limited. Price $2.00.

Dr. Young has done a good work in following up his former book on "Modern Missions," which deals principally with great missionary operations in their modern aspects, with this volume which traces the mission work among the lesser nations and peoples of the earth, and this also in its inceptive phases, rather than in its present status. The author has spared no research to make his record reliable, comprehensive and satisfactory. He writes with fervor, judgment and as one impressed with the sublimity of his subject. The reader will find his pages teeming with stirring narratives and well adapted to fire the heart with missionary zeal.

A BAG OF STORIES. By Anna B. Warner. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers.

Any one who has read a book by Miss Warner will be eager to read another, to recommend her sweet, healthy sentiments to others and to feel that the truth is thus making its way into many households. This is a delightful missionary story.

DAILY EVENING REST, or Thoughts of Peace about the Master. By Agnes Giberne. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers.

To every one weary with the cares of this life and the burdens of sin this little book will bring refreshment and consolation in the presentation which it makes of The Sinner's Friend. He is held up before the mind's eye in many aspects and shown to be a suitable Rest in all conditions and places.

THE COURT OF DESTINY AND OTHER POEMS. By B. J. Radford. St. Louis and Chicago: Christian Publishing Co.

The author of this neat volume has given us several excellent sentiments, some set in blank verse and others in true poetic style. There is a great variety in the subjects thus poetically embalmed, and all tend to cultivate nobleness of nature and sympathy of heart.